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AN' ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
BURMAN EMPIRE,  
COMPILED FROM THE WORKS OF COLONEL SYMES, MAJOR  
CANNING, CAPTAIN COX, DR. LEYDEN, DR.  
BUCHANAN, &c. &c. &c. ;  
A DESCRIPTION OF  
DIFFERENT TRIBES  
INHABITING IN AND AROUND THAT DOMINION ;  
AND  
A NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
LATE MILITARY AND POLITICAL OPERATIONS  
IN THE  
BURMESE EMPIRE,  
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT CONDITION OF  
THE COUNTRY, ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS AND  
INHABITANTS.  
BY  
HENRY G. BELL, ESQ.

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WITH A COLOURED MAP.

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CALCUTTA :  
PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHER BY D'ROZARIO AND CO.

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1852.

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## PREFACE.

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THE present publication consists of compendious selections of the most important passages relative to the Physical peculiarities, Geography, Modern History, Laws, Religion, and Population of the Burman Empire, in the works of Hamilton, Symes, Cox, Canning, the celebrated orientalist Leyden, and other authors. To these is added a brief account of the *Tribes* who inhabit the country taken from the Narrative of the American Missionary, Howard Malcom. The Account of the Burmese War of 1824 by Mr. H. G. Bell which concludes the work, will be a good substitute for the voluminous narrative of Snodgrass, to those who have not access to it.

The Publisher therefore claims to himself no merit beyond what little may be attached by some to the compilation of a series of interesting papers on a topic of growing importance to the subjects of Great Britain. The avowal would have been hardly necessary in the absence of all apprehension on his part, that there would be wanting people who would look to something new or original from the appearance of his Work at the juncture of events, which have placed the Burmese in a position, which, it is to be hoped, will, in a few months make them our fellow-subjects.



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# AN ACCOUNT OF THE BURMAN EMPIRE.

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## SITUATION AND BOUNDARY.

THE Burman empire, which was previously almost unknown, has been developed to the world by Colonel Symes, in his interesting narrative.\* According to his description, it extends from  $9^{\circ}$  to  $26^{\circ}$  north latitude, and from  $92^{\circ}$  to  $107^{\circ}$  east longitude, or about 1,020 geographical miles in length from north to south, and about 860 geographical miles in breadth from east to west.† Its breadth, however, is variable, and even becomes inconsiderable on the peninsula.

\* Of the former kingdoms of Pegu and Ava, there are some, but only few descriptions; and all of them are imperfect and antiquated. Colonel Symes's account of the Embassy to Ava, affords the only authentic information relating to this empire.

† This breadth is calculated on the middle latitude of seventeen degrees, and varies greatly from Colonel Symes's statement. It is not, indeed, clear, whether he speaks of the latitudinal and longitudinal limits inclusively or exclusively, but the difference here would make only about 115 miles.

This extensive region is situated in the south-eastern extremity of Asia, usually distinguished by the name of India beyond the Ganges. The modern Ava empire comprehends many large provinces that formed no part of the original Burman dominions, but which will be found described under their respective heads. To the north it is bounded by Assam and Tibet; to the south by the Indian Ocean and the Siamese territories; to the north-east it has China, and to the east the unexplored countries of Loas, Laetho and Cambodia. On the west it is separated by the Bengal districts of Tipperah and Chittagong, by a ridge of mountains, and the river Nauf. •

Where not confined by the sea, the frontiers of this empire are in a perpetual state of fluctuation. It is probable the boundaries extend still futher to the north, but the breadth varies considerably. Taken in its most extensive sense, that is including countries subject to their influence, the Burman dominions may contain 194,000 square miles, forming altogether the most extensive native government, subject to one authority, at present existing in India. Ava Proper is centrally situated, and surrounded by the conquered provinces, the principal of which are Arracan, Pegu, Martaban, Tenasserim, Junkseylon, Mergui, Tavoy, Yunshan, Lowashan, and Cassay. From the river Nauf on the frontiers of Chittagong there are several good harbours; and from Tavoy to the southward of the Mergui Archipelago, are several others. The principal rivers are the Irawaddy, the Keenduem, the Lokiang, and the Pegu river.

Between the Pegu and Martaban rivers there is a lake, from which two rivers proceed; the one runs north to old Ava, where it joins the Myoungya, or Little Ava river, which comes from mountains on the frontiers of China, the other river runs south from the lake to the sea.

Judging from the appearance and vigour of the natives, the climate must be very healthy. The seasons are regular, and the extremes of heat and cold seldom experienced; the duration of the intense heat, which precedes the commencement of the rains being so short, that it incommodes but very little.

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### FACE OF THE COUNTRY.

Except the swampy delta of the Irawaddy, intersected by the various branches of that river, the face of the country is finely diversified with hills and dales, ranges of mountains, extensive forests, and fertile plains, forming a rich and luxuriant landscape.

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### MOUNTAINS.

The highest mountains are most probably on the borders of Thibet. The other ranges are delineated as running, in general, from north to south; among which, those of Arracan seem to be the best known.

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### RIVERS.

The chief river of the Burman empire, is the Irawaddy, which rising, most probably, in Thibet, or China, passes by Ummera-

poora, the new capital, and falls into the sea by several mouths.\* Its breadth varies from one to two, three, and even four or five miles: and it is interspersed with numerous islands.† This noble river intersects the Burman dominions, in a direction nearly from north to south. Like the Nile and the Ganges, inundating the plains, it dispenses fertility and abundance, while it affords a commodious and extensive inland navigation quite through the country to the borders of China. The river of Pegu, which was supposed to come from China, is now said to rise only about forty miles beyond the city; and the Chinese rivers, which were considered as its heads, are supposed to be those of the great river of Siam.‡ But the rivers of India, extra Gangem, are a subject on which geographers could never yet agree. The ranges of mountains, the lakes, and other grand features of nature, also remain unexplored; and, in fine, the geography of these countries, like that of the rest of Exterior India, and, indeed, of most of the Oriental regions, is so defective, that, until more accurate knowledge can be obtained, any attempt at particular delineation, would be an imposition on the reader.§

\* Pinkerton supposes the Irawaddy to be the Kempoo of Tibet. But Major Rennel seems positive, that it is the Nou Kiang of China. Dr. Buchanan derives at least the eastern branch of the Irawaddy from the frontiers of China.

† For the breadth of the Irawaddy in different parts of its course, see Colonel Symes's Embassy to Ava.

‡ Dr. Buchanan, ap. Col. Symes's Embassy, vol. 2, pp. 414, 415.

§ Dr. Buchanan speaks with uncertainty on the subject of the Burman rivers, although his ideas are judiciously formed.

### CLIMATE.

The climate of a country extending through  $17^{\circ}$  of latitude, must afford some variety, and a still greater difference must be produced by topographical circumstances. The swampy levels towards the mouth of the Irawaddy, which resemble the lower parts of Bengal, must produce an atmosphere extremely different from that of the mountainous provinces bordering on Thibet. In general, however, the climate must be considered as similar to that of Hindostan; but the healthful and vigorous appearance of the people indicates a greater degree of salubrity.\*

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### MINERALOGY.

The mineralogy of the Burman empire is rich, abundant, and various. According to Colonel Symes's account, gold is plentiful. It is found in the sands of the rivers, and there are mines of gold and silver near the frontiers of China. The rubies of Pegu are particularly celebrated, being next to the diamond in value, and almost as peculiar to that country as the latter to Hindostan. Sapphires, amethysts, garnets, and beautiful chrysolites, are numbered among the treasures of the Burman mineralogy. Rubies and sapphires are found in the north-west parts of the empire; but the richest mines are within about thirty miles to the north of Ummerapoora, the new capital. Mines of gold, silver, rubies, and sap-

\* Col. Symes speaks in the strongest terms of the salubrity of the Burman dominions.

phires, are at present open on the mountain of Wooboloo-taun, near the river Kcenduem, which being supposed to rise on the borders of Assam, afterwards joins the Irawaddy. Among the inferior, but more useful metals and minerals of this region, may be noted abundance of tin, iron and lead. There are also sulphur, arsenic and antimony, with abundance of amber, which is dug up in large quantities near the banks of the Irawaddy, and is extremely pure and pellucid. Jasper and loadstone, also, are plentiful; and within a few miles of the new metropolis, there are quarries of marble which equals the finest in Italy.

The kingdom of Ava abounds in minerals. Six days' journey from Bamoo, near the frontiers of China, there are mines of gold and silver called Badouem: but the most valuable are in the vicinity of the capital, nearly opposite to Keoummevum. Precious stones are found in several other parts of the empire. The inferior minerals, such as iron, tin, lead, antimony, arsenic, sulphur, &c. are met with in great abundance. Amber, of a consistence unusually pellucid and pure, is dug up in large quantities near the river; gold is likewise discovered in the sandy beds of streams descending from the mountains. Between the Kcenduem and the Irawaddy, to the northward, there is a small river, called the Shoe Liem Kioup, or the stream of golden sand. Diamonds and emeralds are not produced in the Ava empire; but it has amethysts, garnets, very beautiful chrysolites, jasper, and marble. The quarries of the latter are only a few miles from Ummerapoora. In quality it is equal to the finest

marble of Italy, and admits of a polish that renders it almost transparent. This article is monopolized by the government, it being held sacred, because the images of Gaudma are chiefly composed of this material. The Burman empire also contains the celebrated wells which yield the petroleum oil, an article of universal use throughout the provinces, and realizing a large revenue to the government, it being one of the numerous royal monopolies.

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### SOIL.

Exclusive of the Delta formed by the mouths of the Irawaddy, there is very little low land in the Burman dominions. The teak does not grow in this Delta, but in the hilly and mountainous districts to the northward and eastward of Rangoon. Even at a short distance from Syriam, the country is dry and hilly. The soil of the southern provinces is remarkably fertile, and produces as abundant crops of rice as are to be found in the finest parts of Bengal. Further northward, the country becomes irregular and mountainous; but the plains and vallies, particularly near the river, are exceedingly fruitful. They yield good wheat, and the various kinds of small grain and legumes that grow in Hindostan. Sugar canes, tobacco of a superioir quality, indigo, cotton, and the different tropical fruits are all indigenous. In a district named Palongmiou, to the north-east of Ummerapoora, the tea leaf grows, but it is very inferior to the article produced in China, and is seldom used

but as a pickle. Besides the teak tree, which grows in many parts of Ava, both to the north of Ummerapoor, and in the southern country, there is almost every description of timber that is known in India. Fir is produced in the mountainous part of the country, from which the natives extract the turpentine; but they consider the wood of little value on account of its softness. If it were conveyed to Rangoon, it might prove a beneficial material for the navigation of India. The teak tree, although it will grow on the plains, is a native of the mountains. The forests in this part of Asia, like the woody and uncultivated parts of India are extremely pestiferous. The wood-cutters are a particular class of men, born and bred in the hills, but even they are said to be very short-lived.

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## VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS.

The chief vegetable productions, as well as the nature of the soil, are enumerated in the foregoing extract from Colonel Symes's excellent work. To these, however, might be added numerous drugs used in medicine or manufactures, besides a countless variety, and inexhaustible abundance of indigenous fruits; most of which, indeed, are common to all the countries of Exterior India, as well as to those of Hindostan. The vine grows wild in many of the forests; but from the excess of heat and moisture, as also from want of culture, its fruit is of an inferior nature. It would be tedious, and,



indeed, from want of more accurate knowledge, it is impossible to enumerate the various kinds of trees, which rear their heads in proud magnificence. Among these, however, must be noticed the teak, which, although rare in Hindostan, and not mentioned in any of our accounts of Siam, constitutes the principal glory of the Burman forests.\* Its wood is at least equal, if not superior to the British oak, as a material for ship-building; for besides being as easy to work, it is said to be more durable. This valuable timber abounds in most of the forests of the Burman empire, both to the north of Ummerapoora, and in the southern provinces. Colonel Symes observes, that without the timber trade to Pegu, the British marine in India could exist only on a contracted scale. He estimates the shipping at Calcutta at 40,000 tons; and observes as a proof of its importance, that during the scarcity of the year 1795, when Great Britain was menaced with the horrors of famine, 14,000 tons of shipping, mostly India-built, freighted with rice, brought a seasonable supply to the city of London, and greatly reduced the price of that article. The indigenous timber of Bengal is found to be unserviceable; but some of the finest merchant ships ever seen in the Thames, have been built at Calcutta of teak wood, from the forests of Pegu.

\* On the banks of the Godavery, in the interior of the Deccan, there are extensive forests of teak. Major Rennel's Mem. The exportation, however, is difficult; and both Calcutta and Madras are wholly supplied with this article from the Burman forests.

## TRADE.

A considerable trade is carried on between Ummerapoora, the capital, and Yunan in China. The principal export from Ava is cotton, of which there is said to be two kinds; one of a brown colour for nankeen, and the other white like the cotton of India: this commodity is transported up the Irawaddy in large boats as far as Bamoo, where it is bartered at the common jee or mart with the Chinese merchants, and conveyed by the latter into the Chinese dominions. Amber, ivory, and precious stones, betel nut, bird and the edible nests, brought from the eastern islands, are also articles of commerce; in return the Burmans procure raw and wrought silks, velvets, gold leaf, preserves, paper, and some utensils of hardware. The commerce between the northern and southern quarters of the empire is greatly facilitated by the river Irawaddy, on which several thousand boats are annually employed in transporting rice from the lower provinces, to supply the capital and the northern districts, as also salt and gnapee (pickled sprats). Articles of foreign importation are mostly conveyed up the Irawaddy; a few are introduced by the way of Arracan, and carried over the mountains on men's heads. European broad cloth, a small quantity of hardware, coarse Bengal muslins, Cossimbazar silk handkerchiefs, china-ware, and glass, are the principal commodities. Cocoanuts brought from the Nicobars are looked upon as a great delicacy, and bear a high price. Merchants carry down,

silver, lac, precious stones, and some other articles, but not to any great amount.

In 1795, the quantity of teak and other timber imported to Madras and Calcutta from the Burman dominions, required a return amounting to the value of £200,000 sterling, as that timber cannot be conveyed from the Malabar to the Coromandel coast, unless at so great an expense as to preclude the attempt. The teak trade is a source of direct revenue to the royal family, as all the timber in the country belongs to the king, or to such of his sons as he has appointed to principalities, they consequently feel sensibly any stoppage or diminution of the exportation. In 1812, the price of Shinbin teak planks, which a few years before was only 14 and 16 rupees per pair, had risen to 48 and 52 rupees, and at that extravagant rate could only be procured in small quantities. This rise was in some degree to be ascribed to the disturbed condition of the country, but principally to a monopoly granted by the king to a particular company. The imports to Ava from the British dominions consist chiefly of coarse piece goods, glass, hardware, and broad cloth; the returns are almost wholly in timber. A small trade is carried on with Prince of Wales' Island. The maritime ports of this empire are commodious for shipping, and better situated for Indian commerce than those of any other power. Great Britain possesses the western side of the Bay of Bengal, and the government of Ava (with the exception of the conquered provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui, Tenasserim, Chittagong and Arracan) the eastern. The harbour of Negrais is particularly commo-

dious. Besides the export trade, about 3,000 tons of shipping, in peaceable times, are usually built in Ava, and sent for sale to different quarters of India. In 1809, an extensive commerce was carried on between the Burman country and the French isles of Mauritius and Bourbon, the latter receiving from the former both merchandize and articles of necessity, the produce of the land; but in 1810, in consequence of the strict blockade, this intercourse had nearly ceased, while that with the British dominions continued the most lucrative branch of the Burman revenue.

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### CURRENCY.

The Burmans, like the Chinese, have no coin, silver in bullion, and lead, being the current monies of the country. What foreigners call a tical, properly kiats, is the most general piece of silver in circulation. It weighs 10 pennyweights, 10 grains, and three-fourths. The inferior currency is lead, and all common articles, such as fish, flesh, rice, greens, &c. are sold for so many weights of lead, which being a royal monopoly, is raised in the markets far above its intrinsic value. The average price of rice at the capital is about 2s. 8d. for 84 pounds; at Rangoon and Martaban about 250 pounds for 2s. 8d. It is necessary for every merchant to have a banker to manage his money transactions, who is responsible for the quality of the metal; and by the Burman commercial regulations the exportation of females and silver is expressly prohibited.

## ZOOLOGY.

The zoology, as well as the vegetation and climate, in general corresponds with that of Hindostan. The horses are small, but spirited. Elephants and tigers abound chiefly in Pegu. There are many buffaloes; but the Burmans abstain from all animal food except game. Here are several species of volatiles, and a wild fowl, called the henza, has like the eagle among the Romans, been adopted as the symbol of the empire.

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## NATURAL CURIOSITIES AND ANTIQUITIES.

The chorography of the Burman dominions is not sufficiently explored to afford a list of natural curiosities. There are, however, some ancient monuments which merit the attention of the traveller, particularly the dilapidated temples of Ava, the ancient capital. But the most remarkable of all these remains of the arts, and magnificence of former ages, is that extraordinary edifice, the Shomadob, which constituted the grand ornament of the ancient city of Pegu; and according to tradition, was erected about 500 years before the Christian era.\* This singular structure stands on a double terrace; one side of the lower being 1,391, and of the upper, 684 feet. The building is of brick, octagonal at

\* It must however, be observed, that Oriental traditions and chronology merit little regard.

the base, and spiral at the top, without any cavity or aperture. The summit is crowned with an umbrella of open iron work gilt, fifty-six feet in circumference; and the height of the whole is 361 feet, or 331 feet above the inner terrace. This massy pile appears to be one of the most superb monuments of the East. "From the upper projection that surrounds the Shomadoo, the prospect of the circumjacent country is extensive and picturesque; but it is a prospect of nature in her rudest state: there are few inhabitants, and scarcely any cultivation. The hills of Martaban rise to the eastward, and the Sitang river, winding along the plains, gives an uninterrupted view of its waters. To the north-west, at the distance of about forty miles, are the Galadzet hills, in which the river of Pegu takes its rise; hills, remarkable only for the noxious effect of their atmosphere. In every other direction, the eye looks over a boundless plain, chequered by a wild intermixture of wood and water." The desolating wars between the Burmans and the Peguese, before the latter were finally subjugated, have reduced these once populous districts to an uncultivated waste.

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### GOVERNMENT.

The principal state officers are the following: four woongees, or chief ministers of state (woon signifies a burthen); four woondocks, or assistant ministers; four attawoons, or ministers of the interior; four secretaries, or seredogees; four nachangees, to take notes and report; four

sandegans who regulate ceremonials; and nine sandozains, whose business is to read petitions. In the Burman dominions there are no hereditary dignities or employments; all honours and offices, on the demise of the possessors reverting to the crown. The tsalve or chain is the badge of nobility. They are from 3 to 12, which is the highest; the king alone wearing 24; and almost every article of use as well as of ornament indicates the rank of the owner. The most minute attention also is paid to external forms, the smallest dereliction from them being noticed even by the common people.

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### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

Many of the higher classes of Burmans are of pleasing and affable manners, but crafty and extremely rapacious, for although they receive no pay from the king, they are obliged to present him with large offerings, in order to preserve their appointments; to effect which, in addition to the usual sources of robbery and extortion, they are obliged to have recourse to speculations in trade and to almost universal monopoly. In 1812, the viceroy of Pegu monopolized the supply of coffins. As may be supposed from the nature of the government, great vicissitudes of fortune are experienced. In 1810, the viceroy of Pegu, who had been recently elevated by the king to an equality with himself, was deprived of all his dignities, and ordered up to court with a chain round his neck. That opium had been smoked and spirits drank by the troops, and,

that being too lenient, he had taken off few or no heads since his arrival at Rangoon, were the charges against him. A very short time before, this mild person, now accused of too much leniency, had ordered twelve men, women, and children, who had deserted from him to an obnoxious rival, to have their bellies ripped up; the execution of which sentence was only prevented by the urgent entreaties of the British envoy.

The Indian nations east of the Ganges have always been more cautious in their intercourse with foreign states than those of the west. The courts of Ava and Peking resemble each other in many respects, but in none more than in their vanity and pride, which often manifests itself in a most ludicrous manner. Like the sovereign of China, his majesty of Ava acknowledges no equal. *Boa*, or emperor, is a title which the present sovereign of the Burmans has assumed; the sovereign of China is termed *Oudee Boa*, or Emperor of *Oudee* or China. Although deficient in every thing that can render a state formidable, its sovereign and his functionaries are quite inflated with the idea of their own importance, and present the spectacle of a court at once feeble and arrogant. In 1810, one of the ministers informed the British envoy (Captain Canning), on hearing of the revolutionary war in Europe, that if application had been originally made in a proper manner, his Burman Majesty would have sent an army, and put the British nation in possession of the whole continent of France. Among other absurdities of the same period, a draught of a letter to the Governor General, composed by the Ava ministers, de-



clared the king of England to be a vassal of the Burman monarch; but this was too much even for the despotic Minderajee Praw, who ordered it to be expunged.

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### POPULATION.

It is difficult to form any correct judgment regarding the population of the Burman dominions. When Colonel Symes visited them in 1795, they were said to contain 8000 cities, towns, and villages, without including Arracan. Few of the inhabitants dwell in solitary habitations; they mostly form themselves into small societies, and their dwellings thus collected compose their ruas or villages. Colonel Symes estimated the total number at 17,000,000 including Arracan, while Captain Cox who succeeded him as ambassador, does not go beyond 8,000,000; but from subsequent information collected by Captain Canning, there is reason to believe, that even this last number greatly exceeds the truth. In 1809, the country appeared half depopulated, and the bank of the great river uncultivated and nearly uninhabited, owing to the misery occasioned by the oppressive mode of recruiting the Burman armies. Sahwallee, Meady, Loonghee, and many other formerly large and flourishing towns, were reduced to the condition of wretched villages, while the numerous villages that had lined both banks of the Irawaddy from Keonplalaum to the capital, had nearly all disappeared. Clusters of pagodas and palmira trees still remained to point out their former sites; but the numer-

ous fleets of boats, which before announced the vicinity of the capital, had dwindled down to a solitary fishing dinghy. Children of various ages were repeatedly brought to Captain Canning, whose fathers had been driven to the wars, and whom their mothers entreated him to accept, in hopes of procuring for their wretched offspring that sustenance which they were unable to get for themselves. Many of the unfortunate villagers were dragged from their houses and publicly sold, if unable to pay the exorbitant requisitions of the government. To avoid famine and disease in a camp, or the still worse miseries of slavery, many had recourse to open rebellion, and rendered the river impassable for unarmed boats. According to the information collected by Captain Canning in 1810, the number of registered houses did not exceed 400,000, which would give a population of less than three millions; yet the Burman dominions possess many natural advantages, and under a tolerable government are capable of being carried to a high state of prosperity.

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### REVENUE.

One-tenth of all produce is exacted as the authorized due of the government, and one-tenth is the amount of the king's duty on all foreign goods imported into his dominions. The revenue arising from customs on imports are mostly taken in kind: a small part is converted into cash; the rest is distributed and received in lieu of salaries to the various departments of the court. Money, except on pressing occasions, is ne-

ver disbursed from the royal coffers. To one man the fees of an office are allowed; to another, a station where certain imposts are collected; a third has land in proportion to the importance of his employment. They are all called slaves of the king, and in their turn their vassals are denominated slaves to them. The condition of these grants includes services during war, as well as the civil duties of office. In 1812, with the view of improving the revenues, a general permission was granted to Burmans of all descriptions to drink spirits, use opium, and gamble; practices which had before been punished with the utmost severity, even to death. Although it seems almost impossible, under such a system, to ascertain in any standard currency the amount of the royal revenue, yet the riches of the Burman sovereign are said to be immense, which is rendered probable by the circumstance, that a very small portion of what enters his exchequer ever again returns into circulation, the hoarding of money being a favourite maxim of oriental state policy.

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### ARMY AND NAVY.

The Burmans may be described as a nation of soldiers, every man in the kingdom being liable to be called on for his military services. The king has no standing army except a few undisciplined native Christians and renegadoes from all countries and religions, who act as artillery; a very small body of cavalry, and perhaps 2000 undisciplined, ill armed, naked infantry. The armies are composed of levies raised on the

spur of the occasion by the princes, chobwabs, and great lords, holding their lands by military tenure. The utmost of all descriptions probably never exceeded 60,000 men. The infantry are armed with muskets and sabres, the cavalry with a spear, all the latter are natives of Cassay. The breed of horses in Ava is small, but very active; and contrary to the practice of other eastern countries, they castrate their horses. But the most respectable part of the Burman military force is their war boats. Every town of note in the vicinity of the river is obliged to furnish a certain number of men, and one or more war boats, in proportion to the magnitude of the place. Formerly at a very short notice the king could collect 500 of these boats. They carry from 40 to 50 rowers, and there are usually 30 soldiers armed with muskets on board, together with a piece of ordnance on the prow.

The rower is also provided with a sword and lance, which are placed by his side whilst he plies the oar. The musket was first introduced into the Pegu and Ava countries by the Portuguese, and are of the worst quality.

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### NATIONAL CHARACTER.

The principal provinces of the Burman empire have been already specified, but they now hang very loosely together. The names of the most remarkable towns are Ummerapoora, the capital; Ava, the ancient capital; Monchaboo, the birth-place of Alompra; Pegu, Rangoon, Syriam, Prome, Negrais, Persaim, and Cha-

gaining. Almost all the towns, and even villages, of the Burman country are surrounded by a stockade, which kind of defence the Burmans are very dextrous at erecting.

The general disposition of the inhabitants is strikingly contrasted with that of the natives of Bengal, from which they are only separated by a narrow range of mountains. The Burmans are a lively inquisitive race, active, irascible, and impatient. All the children of Europeans born in the country are considered as the king's subjects, and prohibited from ever leaving it; consequently, are doomed to a life of immorality and degradation. The females of Ava are not concealed from the sight of men; but on the contrary, are suffered to have free intercourse as in Europe: in other respects, however, there are many degrading distinctions, and the Burman treatment of females generally is destitute both of delicacy and humanity. The practice of selling their women to the stranger is not considered as shameful, nor is the female dishonoured. They are seldom unfaithful, and often essentially useful to their foreign masters, who are not allowed to carry their temporary wives along with them. Infidelity is not a characteristic of Burman wives, who in general have too much employment to find leisure for corruption.

In their features the Burmans bear a nearer resemblance to the Chinese than to the natives of Hindostan. The women, especially in the northern parts of the empire, are fairer than the Hindoo females, but are not so delicately formed. The men are not tall in stature, but they are active and athletic, and have a very youthful ap-

pearance, from the custom of plucking the beard instead of using the razor. Both men and women colour their teeth, their eye lashes, and the edges of their eye-lids with black. Marriages are not contracted until the parties reach the age of puberty. The contract is purely civil, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction have nothing to do with it. The law prohibits polygamy, and recognises only one wife, but concubinage is admitted to an unlimited extent. When a man dies intestate, three-fourths of his property go to his children born in wedlock, and one-fourth to his widow. The Burmans burn their dead. In their food, compared with the Hindostances, the Burmans are gross and uncleanly. Although their religion forbids the slaughter of animals in general, yet they apply the interdiction only to those that are domesticated. All game is eagerly sought after, and in many places publicly sold. Reptiles, such as lizards, guanos, and snakes, constitute a part of the subsistence of the lower classes. To strangers they grant the most liberal indulgence, and if they chance to shoot at and kill a fat bullock, it is ascribed to accident. Among the Burmans the sitting posture is the most respectful, but strangers are apt to attribute to insolence, what, in their view, is a mark of deference. The Burman houses are in general raised three or four feet from the ground, on wooden posts or bamboos and mats, and but indifferently thatched. Gilding is forbidden to all Burmans, liberty even to lacker and paint the pillars of their houses is granted to few.

In this empire every thing belonging to the

king has the word shoe or gold prefixed to it; even his majesty's person is never mentioned, but in conjunction with that precious metal. When a subject means to affirm that the king has heard any thing, he says, "it has reached the golden ears;" he who has obtained admittance to the royal presence has been at the "golden feet." The perfume of utr of roses is described as being grateful to the "golden nose." Gold among the Burmans is the type of excellence, yet, although highly valued, it is not used for coin in the country. It is employed sometimes in ornaments for the women, and in utensils, and ear-rings for the men; but much the greatest quantity employed in gilding their temples, in which decoration vast sums are continually lavished. The Burman sovereign is sole proprietor of all the elephants in his dominions, and the privilege to ride on, or keep, one of these animals, is an honour only granted to men of the first rank. In Hindoostan female elephants are prized beyond males, on account of their being more tractable; but in Ava it is the reverse, females being never used on state occasions, and seldom for ordinary riding. The henza, the symbol of the Burman nation, as the eagle was of the Roman empire, is a species of wild fowl called in India the Brahminy goose. It is a remarkable circumstance, that there should not be such an animal as a jackal in the Ava dominions.

The Burmans of high rank have their barges drawn by war boats, it being thought inconsistent with their dignity for great men to be in the same boat with common watermen. It is customary also, for a person of distinction jour-

neying on the water, to have houses built for his accommodation at the places where he means to stop. The materials of these houses are easily procured, and the structure is so simple, that a spacious and commodious dwelling, suitable to the climate, may be erected in little more than four hours. Bamboos, grass for thatching, and the ground rattan, are all the materials requisite; not a nail is used in the edifice, and if the whole were to fall, it would scarcely crush a lap dog.

Notwithstanding the well formed arches of brick that are still to be seen in many of the ancient temples, yet Burman workmen can no longer turn them; which shows how easily an art once well known may be lost. Masonry, in the latter ages has not been much attended to; wooden buildings have superseded the more solid structures of brick and mortar.

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## LANGUAGES.

The Pali language constitutes at the present day the sacred text of Ava, Pegu, and Siam; and the Burman dialect has borrowed the Sanscrit alphabet, in which it is constantly written. But, notwithstanding this appearance of intimacy, the Missionaries, in a specimen of the Lord's Prayer in the Burman, could scarcely discover three genuine Sanscrit words. Many syllables, however, according with those of the Chinese colloquial dialect are to be found, and the language adopts two of the four Chinese tones. The Sanscrit language is here fondly arrested in its progress eastward, and constrained to lend its alphabet to



do little more than clothe and express another system, said, by those who have studied it most closely, to be of monosyllabic origin, and retaining tones completely foreign to the Sanscrit system. The character in common use throughout Ava and Pegu is a round Nagari, derived from the square Pali, or religious text. It is formed of circles and segments of circles variously disposed, and is written from left to right. The common books are composed of the palmira leaf, on which the letters are engraved with stiles. The inhabitants of Ava constantly write the name Burma, although, from affecting an indistinct pronunciation, they often term themselves Byamma, Bomma and Myamma, which are only vocal corruptions of the written name.

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### LAWS.

The laws of the Burmans, like their religion, are Hindoo; in fact there is no separating their laws from their religion. Their code they name *Derma Sath* or *Sastra*, which is one of the commentaries on *Menu*. Their system of jurisprudence, like that of the Chinese, provides specifically for almost every species of crime that can be committed, and adds a copious chapter of precedents to guide the unexperienced, in cases where there is any doubt or difficulty. Trial by ordeal and imprecation are among the absurd passages in the book, which on the subject of females is to an European offensively indecent. It is a singular fact, that the first version of Sir William Jones's translation of the *Institutes* of

sence of pain. These saints, after reforming the world during their life time, and by their superior sanctity acquiring the power of performing miracles, are imagined after death to possess a command over the living, and it is they who are the direct objects of worship with the Buddhists. Buddha, during his incarnation, reformed the doctrines of the Vedas, and severely censured the sacrifices of cattle, or depriving any thing of life. His place of birth and residence is supposed to have been Gya in Behar. Gautama, or Gautom, according to the Hindoos of India, or Gaudma among the inhabitants of the more eastern parts, is said to have been a saint or philosopher, and is believed by the Burmans to have flourished 2,300 years ago. He taught in the Indian schools the heterodox religion and philosophy of Buddha. The image that represents Buddha is called Gaudma or Gautom, which is a commonly received appellation for Buddha himself. This image is the primary object of worship in all countries (except Assam and Cassay) situated between Bengal and China. The sectaries of Buddha contend with those of Brahma for antiquity, and are certainly in the aggregate more numerous. The Cingalese in Ceylon are Buddhists of the purest source, and the Burmans acknowledge to have received their religion from that island, which they name Zehoo. The Rhahaans (Burman monks) say, it was first brought from Zehoo to Arracan, and thence was introduced into Ava, and probably into China. The bonzees of the latter country, like the Rhahaans of Ava, wear yellow as the sacerdotal colour, and in many of their customs and ceremonies have a

striking similitude. Sir William Jones determines the period when Buddha appeared on earth to have been 1014 years before the birth of our Saviour.

The Burmans believe in the metempsychosis, and that, having undergone a certain number of migrations, their souls will, at last either be received into their Olympus, on the mountain Meru, or be sent to suffer torments in a place of divine punishment. Notwithstanding the Burmans are members of the sect of Buddha, and not disciples of Brahma, they nevertheless reverence the Brahmins, and acknowledge their superiority in science over their own priests. The king and all the chief officers, have always in their houses some of these domestic sages, who supply them with astrological advice. The natives of Ava do not inflict on themselves disgusting tortures after the manner of the Braminical Hindoos, but they deem it meritorious to mortify the flesh by the voluntary penance of abstemiousness and self-denial. Like the other sectaries of Buddha they are much attached to their lares or household gods. A Burman family is never without an idol in some corner of the house, made of wood, alabaster, or silver; besides which, the country abounds with praws, or temples, in a ruinous state, yet new ones are daily erecting. For this the Burmans assign as a reason, that, though to men a decayed temple be an act of piety: yet it is not so meritorious as to erect a new one. Those whose finances do not permit them to construct a new one, content themselves with the minor good deed of repairing an old one.

The kioums, or convents of the Rhahaans, are

different in their structure from common houses, and much resemble the architecture of the Chinese. They are entirely made of wood, comprehending in the inside one large hall, open on all sides. There are no apartments for the private recreations of the Rhahaans, publicity being the prevailing system among the Burmans, who admit of no secrets either in church or state. Yellow is the only colour worn by the priesthood. They have a long loose cloak, which they wrap round them so as to cover most part of their body. They profess celibacy, and abstain from every sensual indulgence. The juniors are restricted from wandering about licentiously, the head of every convent having a discretionary power to grant or refuse permission to go abroad. The Rhahaans or priests never dress their own victuals, holding it an abuse to perform any of the common offices of life which may divert them from the contemplation of the divine essence. They receive the contributions of the laity ready dressed, and prefer cold food to hot. At the dawn of day they begin to perambulate the town to collect supplies for the day, each convent sending forth a certain number of its members, who walk at a quick pace through the streets, and support with the right arm a blue lacquered box, in which the donations are deposited. These usually consist of boiled rice mixed with oil, dried and pickled fish, sweetmeats, fruit, &c. During their walk they never cast their eyes to the right or to the left, but keep them fixed on the ground. They do not stop to solicit, and seldom even to look at the donors, and they eat but once a day, at the hour of noon. A much larger quantity

of provisions is commonly procured than suffices for the members of the convent; the surplus is disposed of as charitably as it was given, to the needy stranger, or the poor scholars, who daily attend to be instructed in letters, and taught their moral and religious duties. In the various commotions of the empire, the Rhahaans have never taken any active part, or publicly interfered in politics, or engaged in war; and the Burmans and Peguers, professing the same religion, whoever were conquerors, equally respected the ministers of their faith. Like all eastern nations, the Burmans are fond of processions; such as a funeral, accompanied by a pompous public burning, or the ceremony of admitting youths into the convents of Rhahaans, where the age of induction is from eight to twelve years. There were formerly nunneries of virgin priestesses, who, like the Rhahaans, wore yellow garments, cut off their hair, and devoted themselves to chastity and religion; but these societies were long ago abolished, as being injurious to the population of the state. At present there are a few old women who shave their heads, wear a white dress, follow funerals, and carry water to convents. These venerable dames have a certain portion of respect paid to them.

We have hitherto omitted to notice a very important personage, half sacred, half profane, who, being the second dignitary in the kingdom, has a regular cabinet composed of a woonghee, or prime minister; a woondock, or secretary of state; a soughee or inferior secretary; a nakeen, or transmitter of intelligence; besides other subordinate ministers and functionaries, some of

whom manage the estates which he possesses in various parts of the country. This individual is the white elephant, to whom presents of muslins, chintzes, and silks are regularly made by all foreign ambassadors, the order of precedence in Ava being as follows:—1st. The king; 2d. The white elephant; and 3d. The queen. The residence of the white elephant is contiguous to the royal palace, with which it is connected by a long open gallery supported by numerous wooden pillars, at the further end of which a curtain of black velvet, embossed with gold, conceals the august animal from the eyes of the vulgar, and before this curtain the offerings intended for him are displayed. His dwelling is a lofty hall covered with splendid gilding, both inside and out, and supported by 64 pillars, half of which are elegantly gilt. To two of these his fore feet are fixed by silver chains, while his hind ones are secured by silks of a baser material. His bed consists of a thick mattress covered with blue cloth, over which another of softer composition is spread, covered with crimson silk. His trappings are very magnificent, being gold studded with large diamonds, pearls, sapphires, rubies, and other precious stones. His betel box, spitting pot, ancle rings, and the vessel out of which he feeds, are likewise all of gold inlaid with precious stones, and his attendants and guard amount to one thousand persons. The white elephant thus fed, dressed, and attended, appears to be a diseased animal, whose colour had been affected by a species of leprosy. The one shewn to Captain Canning, in 1810, was of small size, of a sandy colour, and apparently unconscious of his own

importance, although his votaries at a distance were humbly bowing their heads nearly to the ground. By the Burmans, a white elephant is supposed to contain a human soul in the last stage of many millions of transmigrations, at the conclusion of which he is absorbed into the essence of the deity and annihilated; according to the Burman faith, the highest state of beatitude.

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## HISTORY.

From the testimony of the Portuguese historians, it appears, that, in the middle of the 16th century, four powerful states occupied the regions that lie between the south-eastern provinces of British India, Yunnan in China and the eastern sea. Their territories extended from Cassay and Assam on the north-west, and as far south as Junkseylon. These nations were known to Europeans by the names of Arracan, Ava, Pegu and Siam. Ava, the name of the ancient capital of the Burmans, has usually been accepted as the name of the country at large, which is Myamma, and named by the Chinese, Zomien. The Portuguese authors say that the Burmans, though formerly subject to the Kings of Pegu, became afterwards masters of Ava, and caused a revolution at Pegu, about the middle of the 16th century. The Portuguese assisted the Burmans in their wars against the Peguers, and continued to exercise an influence in the Burman and Pegu countries, and still greater in Arracan, so long as they maintained an ascendancy in the east over the other European nations. During the reign of

Louis XIV., several splendid attempts were made to propagate the doctrines of the church of Rome, and advance the interests of the French nation in the kingdom of Siam; but little is related of Ava or Pegu.

The supremacy of the Burmans over the Peguers continued throughout the 17th, and during the first 40 years of the 18th century; when the Peguers in the provinces of Dalla, Martaban, Tongho, and Prome, revolted: a civil war ensued which was prosecuted by both sides with the most savage ferocity. About the years 1750 and 1751, the Peguers, by the aid of arms procured from Europeans trading to their ports, and with the assistance of some renegade Dutch and native Portuguese, gained several victories over the Burmans. In 1752, they invested Ava, the capital, which surrendered at discretion. Dweepdee, the last of a long line of Burman kings, was made prisoner, with all his family, except two sons, who effected their escape to the Siamese. Bonna Della, or Beinga Della, the Pegu sovereign, when he had completed the conquest of Ava, returned to his own country.

A man now arose to rescue his country from this state of degradation.—Alompra (the founder of the present dynasty,) a man of low extraction, then known by the name of the Huntsman, was continued by the conqueror in the chiefship of Monchaboo, at that time an inconsiderable village. His troops at first consisted of only 100 picked men, with which he defeated the Peguers in several small engagements, and his forces increasing, he suddenly advanced and obtained possession of Ava about the autumn of 1753.



From this date, after a series of hard-fought actions, he first expelled the Peguers from the northern provinces, then pursued them into their own territories, where, after a protracted siege or rather blockade, he took their capital, which he abandoned to indiscriminate plunder and massacre. He next invaded Siam, and would have also effected the conquest of that empire, if he had not been prevented by a mortal disease while besieging the metropolis, which arrested his career on the 15th of May, 1760, in the 50th year of his age, after a short and successful reign of only eight years. In these wars the French favoured the Peguers, while the English inclined to the Burmans.

Alompra was succeeded by his eldest son Namdojee Praw, under whom the limits of the empire were extended, but his reign was short, as his death took place in 1764. His brother Shembuan then assumed the reins of government, and was very successful in all his martial undertakings, especially against the Siamese, whose capital he took in 1766, but was unable to retain permanent possession of so distant a country. In A. D. 1767, or 1131 of the Burman era, the Chinese sent an army of 50,000 men from the western frontier of Yunan, which advanced as far into the country as the village of Chiboo, where they were hemmed in by the Burmans. The Tartar cavalry, on whose vigour and activity the Chinese army depended for supplies, could no longer venture out either to procure provisions or to protect convoys. Under these circumstances their army was attacked and wholly destroyed, except about 2,500, whom the Burmans

sent in fetters to the capital, where they were compelled to ply their trades according to the royal pleasure. They were also encouraged to marry Burman wives, as are all strangers, and to consider themselves as Burmans. This custom is singular among the civilized countries of the east, and peculiarly remarkable in a people who derive their tenets from a Hindoo source. It is well known, that in China even the public prostitutes are strictly prohibited from all intercourse with any other than a Chinese; nor is any foreign woman permitted to enter the territories, or visit the ports of that jealous nation. Hindoo women of good caste are equally inaccessible, and admission into a respectable tribe is not attainable by money.

The remaining years of Shembuan were occupied in subduing the revolts of the Peguers, harassing the Siamese, and effecting the conquest of Munipoor or Cassay, which last event took place in the year 1774. He died two years afterwards, and was succeeded by his son Chenguza, aged 18, who, proving a debauched blood-thirsty monster, was dethroned and put to death by his uncle Minderajee Praw, in 1782, after a short, but (as refers to foreign wars) tranquil reign of six years. Minderajec Praw was the fourth son of the great Alompra, the founder of the dynasty. One of his first acts was to drown his nephew Momien, (the son of Namdojee Praw, the second sovereign,) by fixing him betwixt two jars, which were sunk in the stream, conformably to the Burman mode of executing members of the royal family. When he ascended the throne he was 43 years of age, and had two

sons already grown up to man's estate. He had enjoyed the throne but a short time, when he had nearly been deprived both of life and diadem by a desperado named Magoung, who, with a gang of about 100 confederates, attacked him and his guards in his own palace, where they all perished. During his days of leisure, this monarch directed much of his attention to astronomical studies, and became a thorough believer in judicial astrology. Brahmins, who although inferior in sanctity to the Rhahaans, are nevertheless held in high respect by the Burmans, had long been accustomed to migrate from Cassay and Arracan to Ava. Minderajee Praw appointed a certain number of them his domestic chaplains, and, prompted by their persuasions, he determined to withdraw the seat of government from Ava and found a new metropolis, which he did at Umerapoora.

In the year 1783, corresponding with the Burman year 1145, he sent a fleet of boats against Arracan, which was conquered after a slight resistance. and Mahasumda, the Rajah, and his family made prisoners. The surrender of Cheduba, Ramree, and the Broken Isles, followed the conquest of Arracan, and although the Burmans could not preserve the possession of the interior of Siam, they retained the dominion over the sea coast as far as Mergui. In the year 1785, they attacked the island of Junkseylon with a fleet of boats and an army, but although at first successful were ultimately compelled to retreat with considerable loss. The Burman sovereign, whose pride was deeply mortified by this, resolved to repair the disgrace, and in 1786, invaded Siam

with an army of 30,000 men, but was totally defeated near the frontier by Pietick Singh, the King of Siam, his useless cannon taken, and himself with great difficulty escaping captivity. The Burmans ascribe their defeat in this action to the incumbrance of their cannon, which were old ship guns mounted on old carriages. In 1790, the Siamese obtained possession of Tavoy by treachery, which the Burmans, in 1791, regained by the same expedient, and that year compelled the Siamese to raise the siege of Mergui. In 1793, peace was concluded with the Siamese, who ceded to the Burmans the western maritime towns as far south as Mergui, thus yielding to them the entire possession of the coast of Tennasserim and the two important seaports of Mergui and Tavoy.

In 1795, his Burman majesty learning that three distinguished robbers from the Burman dominions had taken refuge in the Bengal district of Chittagong, without communicating his intentions, or in any shape demanding the fugitives, thought proper to order a body of 5,000 men under an officer of rank, to enter the Company's territories, with positive injunctions to the commander not to return unless he brought with him the delinquents, dead or alive; and further to support this detachment, an army of 20,000 men was held in readiness at Arracan. In consequence of this irruption, a strong detachment was sent from Calcutta, a battalion of Europeans by water, and the Native Infantry by land, under the command of General Erskine. Sree Nunda Kiozo, the Burman chief, to whom the task of reclaiming the fugitives had been assigned, after

his army had crossed the river and encamped on the opposite bank, dictated a letter to the British judge and magistrate of Chittagong, acquainting him with the reasons of the inroad, and that the capture of the delinquents was his sole object, without harbouring any design of hostilities against the English. At the same time he declared in a peremptory style, that until they were given up he would not depart from the Company's territories, and, as a confirmation of the menace, fortified his camp with stockades. These matters being reported at Calcutta, the magistrate of Chittagong was ordered to apprehend the refugees, and keep them in safe custody until furnished with further instructions.

On the approach of General Erskine, Sree Nunda Kiozo sent a flag of truce, proposing terms of accommodation, stipulating for the surrender of the fugitives as the basis of the agreement. The General replied, that no terms could be listened to while the Burmans continued on British ground; but that as soon as they withdrew from their fortified camp, and retired within their own frontier, he would enter on the subject of their complaints, notifying also, that, unless they evacuated the Chittagong district within a limited time, force would be used to compel them. The Burman chief, with a manly confidence in the British character, waited personally on General Erskine, and disclosed to him the nature of his instructions, the enormity of the offenders, and the outrages they had committed. General Erskine assured him it was far from the intention of the British government to screen delinquents, but that it was impossible

for him to recede from his first determination. The Burman commander agreed to withdraw his troops, and the retreat was conducted in the most orderly manner, nor had any one act of violence been committed by the Burman troops during their continuance in the Company's territories. The guilt of the refugees being afterwards established, they were delivered over to the Burman magistrates, by whose sentence, two out of the three underwent capital punishment.

From the above date until 1809, when Captain Canning's mission took place, the condition of this empire, both moral and political, had been progressively deteriorating, and the intellect of its sovereign gradually verging towards insanity. In that year, Minderajee Praw had attained the age of seventy-one, and when seen by the British envoy, appeared still a robust old man, with harsh features, plainly dressed, and seated on a wooden frame covered with carpet. At all times superstitious, cruel, and despotic, age had aggravated these evil qualities, and rendered him so gloomy, suspicious, and irascible, as to be quite insupportable to his family and dependants. An unaccountable caprice induced him to abandon Ummerapoor, the capital he had created, and fix his court at Mengoury, the general name of a cluster of sand banks seven miles above Ummerapoor, which space for six months of the year is covered a foot deep with sand, and in the rains is two feet under water. In this strange retreat he was accustomed to sit for days absorbed in gloomy melancholy, and yet so strongly averse to die, as to believe in the virtue of charms and elixirs, to the compounding of which last he devoted a considerable portion of his leisure.

The Engy Tekien, or heir apparent, died in 1808, and also his chief minister, a very respectable old man, both of whom had frequently prevented or mitigated many of the king's absurd and sanguinary orders. Deprived of these checks his rage became ungovernable, and he often pursued with his sword and spear any person whose countenance he disliked. He also at times ordered hundreds for execution, and then executed his ministers for obeying his orders. Feuds, jealousies, and distrust, prevailed among all branches of the royal family, and were by him, with a view to self-preservation, encouraged, being equally feared and hated by every description of persons. Some houses not far from the king's palace having been attacked, one of the assailants was wounded and taken, and on examination proved to be in the service of a minister attached to the Prince of Prome. This functionary, in consequence of the discovery, together with his wife and child (six years of age,) were ordered to be hacked in pieces, which sentence was duly executed, and sometimes afterwards, 30 men, women, and children, were burned and beat to death with bamboos, on the same account. While these atrocities were perpetrating at the capital, the whole time and attention of the government were occupied by the numerous commotions in all parts of the country, and more especially by the formidable insurrection of Nakonek. This person had been a respectable merchant, who having built several pagodas, was deemed religious.—To conciliate the gang robbers, whom he could not resist, he occasionally made them presents of provisions and other

articles. Minderajee, the king, being informed of this, ordered Nakonek to be put to death as an accomplice, but he receiving timely notice of the benevolent intention, fled to the robbers, and was elected their chief. From henceforward the insurrection became regularly organized, and nothing less was aimed at than the deposition of the reigning dynasty. After many engagements, Nakonek acquired possession of Sillahmew, on which event he assumed the insignia of royalty, being then 42 years of age, and reported to possess the description of abilities necessary to qualify him for an usurper. Under these circumstances, the condition of the interior of Ava became equally deplorable with that of the river banks; villages and towns were every where deserted, robbers and insurgents ranged about the country, and many of the harassed inhabitants, at the risk of their lives, openly expressed their wishes, that the English would either take the country, or allow them to migrate to Bengal. The existing Engy Tekien, or heir apparent, was also very desirous of securing the support of the British government to his claims to the throne, as on the event of his grandfather's death, the succession would ultimately be decided by an appeal to arms, for which purpose he deemed five thousand troops amply sufficient.

Prior to 1809, a mission on the part of the French, under a Colonel de la Houssaye, had been sent to the court of Ava, but it does not appear that the intrigues of this legation were attended with any important result. In 1809, however, Minderajee Praw, instigated by a colony of mischievous and spurious Brahmins,



(their names ending in Doss and Singh), twenty in number, demanded from the British government the provinces of Dacca and Chittagong, as ancient appendages to the Burman empire. These emissaries found their way to the capital of Ava by the way of Ramoo in Chittagong, and by Arracan, and in effecting the journey proceeded by unfrequented roads over the mountains. Two of them were soon after sent back from Ummerapoorra to Chittagong and Dacca for the purpose of taking plans. In 1813, a Burman akawoon, or nobleman, was dispatched on a mission of a different nature. This person, in 1813, visited Benares for the ostensible purpose of collecting religious writings, but in reality, with the design of procuring some Hindostanee females, in which it appears he succeeded, as on his return he presented one to the king, representing her to be the daughter of the Raja of Arracan, sent by that chief as a token of respect to his Burman majesty. As may be supposed, this agent from the court of Ava while at Benares made no attempt to procure any sacred writings, but as a collateral object, engaged in secret conferences with some Brahmins there, who carry on an intercourse with the Burman capital, but the whole of these intrigues were considered by the Bengal government as too contemptible for notice.

In 1813, a change took place in the commercial system of Ava, by the abolition of all the duties laid on since the year 1788, the sovereign having issued an order to that effect. Although the abrogation of these oppressive imposts was accompanied by all the necessary formalities, so

slender an opinion was entertained of his Burman majesty's good faith, by the merchants of Calcutta, that it was at first considered merely an expedient to entrap a number of British vessels and crews, to be retained as hostages for the expulsion of the Mugh refugees from Chittagong. The supreme government, therefore, when they announced the fact to the public, took great care not to pledge themselves for its performance, yet in consequence of the notification, the remaining duties being only 15 per cent., many vessels resorted to Rangoon from the different presidencies, when although it does not appear that any very glaring breach of faith occurred, yet neither did the Burman court strictly adhere to the terms of the proclamation. An additional duty of two per cent. was levied, to which even ships that had previously sailed were declared liable, and security for its payment extorted from the agents at Rangoon who had transacted the business.

About this period Lord Moira succeeded to the supreme government, when the Burman envoys then in Calcutta, adverting to the practice of their own country, where every change of governor usually produces a reversal of his predecessor's measures, requested to be informed whether or not his Lordship intended to persevere in the protection afforded to the refugee Mughls from Arracan, as, unless they had a written confirmation of his intention to do so, they would not only be disbelieved on their return to Ava, but suffer severe punishment for supposed remissness in the execution of their duty. To preserve them from this dilemma, a

written confirmation was in consequence prepared, and ratified by his Lordship's signature.

In 1810, there were four Missionaries in Ava, which offered a fair field for their exertions, the Burmans being restrained by few shackles, and general toleration being a standing maxim of government, but at that period no progress of importance had been made. In 1813, the Burman sovereign dispatched Mr. Felix Carey to Bengal to procure vaccine variola for the purpose of vaccinating the son of his royal highness the Engy Praw, and the general introduction of that prophylactic into the Burman dominions.

In 1814, this barbarous and ignorant court renewed the wild and extravagant scheme of forming a confederation among all the native princes of India, to effect the expulsion of the British; and connected with the plan, a rumour was circulated through the Burman territories, that the King of Ava meant to make a pilgrimage to Gya and Benares, at the head of an army of 40,000 men. An emissary also, disguised as a merchant, was dispatched to Dacca, on a clandestine mission to the Seik country and Upper Hindostan, while the Shahbunder of Arracan who had been dispatched by a different route, visited Trincomalee and Madras, where he collected such information as he could procure regarding the politics of Southern India. This Burman intrigue was from the beginning fully known to the Bengal government, but so little importance was attached to it that it was not deemed necessary to betray any jealousy by interdicting the Burman commercial intercourse

with the city of **Dacca**, to which the surreptitious merchant was allowed to proceed, but as his commercial pretensions there ceased, the magistrate of that city was instructed to arrest his further progress, and send him back to Arracan.

In 1817, it was reported by the magistrate of Chittagong, that a Burman force amounting to 6,000 men had marched towards the frontiers of Silhet, while the ingress and egress of various intriguers through the Chittagong district required the unceasing vigilance of the government. At the same time, a Burman officer, who had made a clandestine tour through Bengal, and was noted for his enmity to the British government, was appointed governor of a section of the Arracan province situated between the capital and the river Nauf. No events of the slightest importance ever resulted from these apparently hostile preparations, and uncommon numbers of Burman merchant boats continued to pass and repass through the British provinces. The death of old Minderajee Praw, which took place on the 5th of June, 1819, in the 83rd year of his age, had tended to remove still further all apprehensions of a rupture. Immediately on that event taking taking place, the Engy Tekien, or heir apparent, (grandson to the deceased monarch,) assumed the government; the Junior branches of the family revolted, and scenes of bloodshed and massacre commenced, such as are usual among factions whose hatred to each other is too implacable to admit of their leaving their work half done.—*Symes, Canning, Public MS. Documents, Cox, Leyden, F. Buchanan, &c. &c.*

## CITIES AND TOWNS IN THE BURMAN DOMINION.

UMMERAPOORA (*Amarapura, the city of the Immortals*).—A large city of India beyond the Ganges, and the modern capital of the Burman empire. Lat.  $21^{\circ} 55'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 7'$  E. This metropolis stands on the banks of a deep and extensive lake, about seven miles long by one and a half broad. When filled by the periodical rains, the lake on the one side, and the river on the other, form a dry peninsula, on which the city is placed. On entering the lake when the floods are at the highest, the number and variety of the boats, the great expanse of water, with the lofty surrounding hills, present an extraordinary sight to a stranger.

The fort of Ummerapoorra is an exact square. There are four principal gates, one in each face, and there is also a smaller gate on each side of the great gate, equidistant between it and the angle of the fort, comprising 12 gates in all. At each angle of the fort there is a large quadrangular bastion which projects considerably; there are also eleven smaller bastions on each side, including those over the gateway. Between each of these bastions is a curtain extending 200 yards in length, from which calculation it results that a side of the fort occupies 2,400 square yards. The ditch of the fort is wide, and faced with brick; the passage across is over a causeway formed by a mound of earth, and defended by retrenchments. The rampart faced by a wall of brick is about 20 feet high, exclusive of the pa-

rapet, which has embrasures for cannon and apertures for muskets. The body of the rampart is composed of earth sustained within and externally by strong walls. Small demi-bastions project at regular distance, and the gates are massive and guarded by cannon. This fortress considered as an eastern fortification, is respectable, but insufficient to resist the approaches of an enemy skilled in artillery tactics. From the height and solidity of the wall, the Burmans consider it impregnable, although a battery of half dozen well-served cannon would breach it in a few hours. The southern face of the fort is washed during the rainy season by the waters of the lake, and the houses of the city extend along the bank as far as the extreme point of land.

In Ummerapoorra there are but few houses of brick and mortar, and these belong to the members of the royal family. The houses of the chief persons are surrounded by a wooden enclosure; and all houses whatever are covered with tiles, and have in the ridge of the roof earthen pots filled with water, in readiness to be broken should fire occur. The splendour of the religious buildings is very striking, owing to the unbounded expenditure of gilding, which is applied to the outside of the roofs as well as within, and must absorb much bullion. The gold leaf used is exceedingly pure, and bears exposure to the air for a long time without suffering injury. These edifices being generally composed of wood, and other perishable materials, their existence is not of any very long duration. Contiguous to the fort is a small street, formerly entirely occupied by shops of silversmiths,

who exposed their ware in the open balcony, and displayed a great variety of Burman utensils; but when visited by Captain Canning, in 1810, the greater part of these shops had disappeared, and on the 28th March of that year the entire city and fort, including all the places and about 20,000 houses, were destroyed by fire. The pudigaut or royal library is situated in the north-west angle of the fort, in the centre of a court paved with broad flags. The books are kept in wooden chests curiously ornamented, about 100 in number, and well filled; the contents of each chest are marked in letters of gold on the lid. The greater part concern divinity; but history, music, medicine, painting, and romance, have also their separate volumes. Across the lake there are extensive fields of wheat, which, in 1795, was sold in the city at the rate of one talki (nearly 2s. 6d.) for 56 pounds weight, and equal in quality to the finest in England.

Ummerapoora is subdivided into four distinct subordinate jurisdictions, in each of which a maywoon presides. This officer, who in this province is a viceroy, in the capital performs the duties of a mayor, and holds a civil and criminal court of justice. In capital cases he transmits the evidence with his opinion in writing to the lotoo, or grand chamber of consultation, where the council of state assembles. There are regularly established lawyers, who conduct causes and plead; eight of these are licensed to plead before the lotoo, and their usual fee is 16s. Ummerapoora was founded by the Burman monarch Minderajee Praw, so recently as 1783, about four miles east of Old Ava the ancient capital,

and, as already related, has since been abandoned by him through an unaccountable caprice, for some sterile sand banks seven miles further up the stream. Buildings in this part of India are almost wholly composed of wood, and the river presenting a convenient water carriage, a capital is created and increases with most incredible rapidity. About A. D. 1800, the population was estimated by Captain Cox at 175,000, and the houses at from 20,000 to 25,000; but in 1810, Captain Canning was of opinion that the population had diminished one half since Colonel Symes's mission. Every facility being supposed, a communication may be held between the British frontier, and the capital of Ava in 12 or 13 days; viz. to Shembighewn, 2 days; thence to Arracan, 8 days; thence to Ramoo in Chittagong, 2 days; total 12 days. There is another road from Arracan to the Ava territories which branches off at Padang, a town situated on the Irawaddy about 10 days' journey above Rangoon.—*Symes, Canning, Cox, &c. &c.*

AVA.—A town of the Burman empire, properly named Aingwa, four miles west from the new capital above described. Lat.  $21^{\circ} 51'$  N. long.  $95^{\circ} 58'$  E. This place is divided into the upper and lower city, both of which are fortified, the lower being about four miles in circumference. It is protected by a wall 30 feet high, at the foot of which there is a deep and broad fosse. The communication betwixt the fort and the country is over a mound of earth crossing the ditch that supports a causeway; the wall is sustained on the inside by an embankment of earth. The upper or small fort does not exceed a mile in



circumference, and is much the strongest, but all the walls are mouldering to decay. The materials of the houses, which consisted principally of wood, were transported to the new city of Ummerapoor, but the ground, where not covered with grass, still retains traces of former buildings and streets. The disposition of the latter nearly resembles that of Ummerapoor.

In the temple of Logathero Praw is still to be seen a gigantic image of Gaudma, of marble, seated in its customary position on a pedestal. The height of the idol, from the top of the head to the pedestal on which it sits, is nearly 24 feet; the head is 8 feet in diameter, and across the breast it measures 10 feet. The Burmans assert that it is composed of one entire block of marble, nor on the closest inspection can any junction be perceived. The building has evidently been erected over the idol, as the entrance would scarcely permit the introduction of his head. Within the fort stands a temple of superior sanctity named Shoegunga Praw, in which all oaths of consequence are administered, the breach of which is considered as a most heinous crime. How this temple obtained so eminent a distinction is not known. Besides these two, there are numerous temples, on which the Burmans never lay sacrilegious hands, dilapidating by the corrosion of time; indeed it would be difficult to exhibit a more striking picture of desolation and ruin, than that which this forsaken capital presents.—*Symes, &c.*

CHAGAING.—A large fortified town in the Burman dominions, situated on the west bank of the Irawaddy, opposite to the city of Ava. Lat.

21° 54' N. long. 96° E. This is the principal emporium to which cotton is brought from all parts of the country; and where, after being cleaned, it is embarked for the China market. It is sent from hence by the Irawaddy in boats, which carry about 36,000 pounds; the voyage to Quantong, on the frontiers of the province of Yunan in China, occupying from 30 to 40 days. In the latter part of the journey, the passage is difficult and dangerous, owing to the increased rapidity of the stream over a rocky channel. At Chagaing, females perform the office of cleaning the cotton from the seed, which is effected by double cylinders turned by a lathe.

Namdojee Praw, the second monarch of the reigning family, removed the seat of government from Monchaboo to Chagaing, on account of the purity of the air and the beauty of the scenery around it. The town is a great place of religious resort, on account of the number of praws or temples erected in the neighbourhood. It is also the principal manufactory of idols, which, being hewn out of an adjacent quarry of fine alabaster, are sculptured here, and afterwards transported to the remotest corners of the Burman empire. Near to Chagaing is a smaller town named Kycockzeit, remarkable for being the great sculpture shop of marble idols, the inhabitants being all statuaries. Here are 30 or 40 large yards crowded with artists at work on images of various dimensions, but all of the same personage, Gaudma, sitting cross-legged on a pedestal. The largest a little exceeds the human size, and the cost is £12 or £13; but some diminutive Gaudmas may be had for six or

seven shillings. The workmen do not part with their sacred commodity to any but Burmans. In the neighbourhood there is a manufactory of rockets of a most enormous size. The tubes are the trunks of trees, bored like a pump, in some the cavity of the cylinder is 9 or 10 inches in diameter, and the wood about 2 inches thick; the length varies from 12 to 20 feet. These tubes are filled with a composition of charcoal, saltpetre, and gunpowder, rammed very hard, and the large ones are discharged from a high scaffold, erected on purpose. Bamboos fastened together, of a length adapted to preserve the poise, from the tail of the rocket. In this branch of pyrotechny the Burmans take great delight, and are particularly skilful.—*Symes, Co.r., &c.*

PAGAHM.—A town of the Burman empire, situated on the east side of the Irawaddy. Lat.  $21^{\circ} 9'$  N. long.  $94^{\circ} 35'$  E. In remote times this city was the residence of a long dynasty of kings, and is still famous for its numerous temples, to count which is among the proverbial impossibilities of the Burmans. Scarcely any thing now remains of ancient Pagahm, except its innumerable mouldering temples, and the vestiges of an old brick fort, the ramparts of which are still to be traced. When visited by Colonel Symes in 1795, the bazars were well provided with rice, pulse, greens, garlick, onions, and fruit; besides fresh fish, gnapee (putrid sprats), and dead lizards, which last the Burmans account a great delicacy when well cooked; but the markets contained no butcher's meat. Pagahm is said to have been the residence of 45 succes-

sive monarchs, and abandoned 500 years ago in consequence of divine admonition. Its remains prove it to have been a place of no ordinary splendour. Many of the most ancient temples here are not solid at the bottom. A well arched dome supports a ponderous superstructure, within which an image of Gaudma sits enshrined. His general posture is sitting on a pedestal, adorned with representations of the sacred leaf of the lotus; the left hand resting on the lap, the right pendent. Even after it ceased to be the metropolis, Pagahm was long reckoned the second city of the empire; but when visited by Captain Canning in 1809, this once magnificent and populous town exhibited a striking picture of the desolation that pervaded the Burman empire. The men had been forcibly carried away to the army; the defenceless women and children plundered by Nakonek, the insurgent, and the greater part of the town reduced to ashes. The manufactures of lacquered ware, for which the town was famous, were reduced to small sheds, containing a few cups and betel boxes.—*Symes, Canning, &c. &c.*

RANGOON.—The principal sea-port of the Burman empire, situated in the province of Pegu. Lat.  $16^{\circ} 47'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 9'$  E. The entrance of the river below Rangoon resembles that of the Ganges, but its navigation is more commodious. The town stretches along the banks of the river about a mile, and is not more than a third of a mile broad. In 1795, there were 5,000 registered taxable houses in the city and suburbs, but in 1812, by fire and misgovernment, they had been reduced to 1,500. The trade of the port had

proportionably decayed. In 1810, the shahbunder or custom-master, was an Englishman of the name of Rogers, who thirty years before had deserted from an Indiaman. Having suscribed himself a vassal to the Prince of Prome, he became subject to the Burman laws, was raised to the dignity above mentioned, and frequently put to the torture. Another principal member of the Rangoon government was Baba Sheen, an old Armenian, who, although he received no salary, was obliged annually to make the King considerable presents, and had more than once been stripped by his Majesty of all he possessed. On the 13th of January, 1812, Rangoon, with the exception of a very few houses, was totally destroyed by fire; but in a country of forests a wooden town is soon rebuilt. In the same year, during a temporary alarm of an attack from the *Malabar*, a British cruizer of 20 guns, the viceroy of Pegu ordered all the tombs to be demolished, and children scarcely able to walk were seen carrying one, two, or three bricks, according to their strength, to the batteries. While the uproar lasted, the European tombs were overthrown along with the rest, but the British envoy, Captain Canning, having remonstrated against this sacrilegious act, the viceroy meanly disavowed his share in the transaction, and undertook to have them rebuilt. Indeed the condition of Prome, Rangoon, and all the large towns in Pegu, is such, that an expedition by water could easily obtain possession of them all.—*Symes, Canning, Cox, &c.*

PEGU.—An ancient kingdom of India beyond the Ganges, which now forms one of the southern

provinces of the Burman empire. The word Pegu appears to be a corruption of Bagoo, the vulgar name of the capital. The original inhabitants denominate themselves Mon; by the Chinese and Burmans they are termed Talleing; and by the Siamese Mingmon. The province of Pegu extends along the mouths of the two great rivers Irawaddy and Thaulayn, (or of Ava and Martaban), and occupies the sea coast from the frontier of Arracan to those of Siam. The town of Prome was formerly its northern frontier.

The river of Pegu, which was supposed to come from China, rises among the hills, about 100 miles from the sea, which form the boundary between the Burman and Pegu countries. Its communication with the sea is by the Rangoon river, and in the fair season it is almost dry. The country inland from the river is clear of trees and brushwood; but on the banks of the channel there are thickets which abound with the domestic fowl in a wild state and peacocks, but it is also infested by tigers. About a day's journey to the south of the city of Pegu, the inhabitants are much molested by wild elephants that occupy in great numbers a forest to the north-east. These powerful animals, allured by the early crops of rice and sugar cane, make predatory incursions in large troops, and do much mischief, devastating a great deal more than they devour. This province seems to be the favourite abode of the elephant, and one of his Burman Majesty's titles is, "Lord of the white elephant, and of all the elephants in the world."

Pegu having been long subject to the Burman

empire of Ava, the history of its conquest and other particulars will be found narrated under that head. When the Burmans had completed its subjugation, they subdivided it into 32 districts, and named it Henzawaddy, which is the Sanscrit name for the whole province. Minde-rajee Praw, the fifth king of the present dynasty, abrogated many severe penal laws imposed by his predecessors upon the native Peguers; but a grand distinction between the two still continues, Burmans alone being appointed to places of trust and power. No brick buildings are allowed in Pegu, except such as belong to the king, or are dedicated to their divinity Gaudma. From the plenty of teak with which the Pegu forests abound, this province has long been famous for ship-building. So early as 1707, the Arabs of Muscat, then a considerable maritime power, were accustomed to build ships here, some from 30 to 50 guns. For the procuring of this valuable timber, a great intercourse subsists between Pegu and all the British provinces, more especially Bengal, where the vessels are almost entirely fabricated of Pegu teak, with the assistance of the country timber.

The inhabitants of Pegu appear to have attained civilization at a more early period than the Burmans, and though now reduced were formerly a great and potent nation. In the early Portuguese histories they are denominated the Pandalus of Mon, and they are supposed to have been founded on the ancient Kalaminhm empire. The name of Kalaminhm, mentioned by the Portuguese is probably connected with the Siamese name Mingmon. The Mon lan-

guage is still used by the inhabitants of Pegu, and appears quite original. It is said by the Burmans and Siamese to have no affinity to either of their languages. Owing to the long and sanguinary wars between the Burmans and Peguers, the greater part of this province remains in a state of desolation. In 1812, the 32 districts of Pegu were rated at 3,000 men for the Arracan war; but it was found impossible to collect that number owing to the disturbed and depopulated state of the country. The rains in Pegu commence about the middle of May, and during the continuance of the rainy season, it would be impossible to carry on hostilities by land; but the country being everywhere intersected by rivers, an easy conveyance is afforded for troops and military stores.—*Symes, Leyden, Canning, Buchanan, Cox, &c.*

PEGU.—The capital of the preceding province, situated about 90 miles by water above the seaport of Rangoon. Lat.  $17^{\circ} 40'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 12'$  E. The extent of ancient Pegu may be still traced by the ruins of the ditch and wall that surround it. From these it appears to have been a quadrangle, each side measuring one mile and a half, the breadth of the ditch was about 60 yards, and the depth 10 or 12 feet. When in repair, even in the dry season, the ditch had seldom less than four feet of water. The wall was composed of brick badly cemented with clay mortar about 35 feet thick, with small equidistant bastions about 300 yards asunder; but the whole is now in a most ruinous condition. The Burman monarch Alompra, when he acquired possession of the city in 1757, rased every build-



ing to the ground, and dispersed or led into captivity all the inhabitants. The temples or praws, which are very numerous, were the only buildings that escaped his fury, and of these the great pyramid of Shoemadoo has alone been revered and kept in repair. About 1790, Mindera-jee Praw, the reigning monarch, to conciliate the natives, issued orders to rebuild Pegu, and invited the scattered families of former inhabitants to re-people their deserted city. At the same time he ordered the viceroy to quit Rangoon, and make Pegu his future residence, and the seat of provincial government. The present inhabitants who have been induced to return, consist chiefly of Rhahaans, or priests, the followers of the court, and a few poor Pegu families. The men of business continue to reside at Rangoon, and the whole number of inhabitants in 1795 did not exceed 7,000. A great proportion of the former inhabitants are scattered over the provinces of Tongho, Martaban, and Talowmeou.

The city of Pegu in its renovated state is fenced round with a stockade from 10 to 12 feet high. There is one main street running east and west, crossed at right angles by two smaller streets. At each extremity of the principal street, there is a gate defended by a wretched piece of ordnance, and a few musqueteers, who never post sentinels, and are generally asleep in a neighbouring shed. The streets of Pegu are spacious, and paved with brick, which the ruins of the old town plentifully supply. The houses are all made of mats, or of sheathing boards, supported on bamboos or posts, and extremely

combustible. As a precaution against fire, at each door there stands a long bamboo with an iron hook to pull down the thatch, and there is also another pole adapted to suppress fire by pressure. Almost every house has earthen pots filled with water on the roof, and a particular class of people, whose business is to prevent and extinguish fires, walk the streets during the night.

The object in the city of Pegu that attracts most notice is the temple of Shoemadoo Praw. Shoe in the Burman tongue signifies gold, and madoo appears to be a corruption of Mahadeo. This temple is a pyramidical building composed of brick and mortar, without excavation or aperture of any sort, octagonal at the base, and spiral at the top; each side of the base measuring 162 feet. The great breadth diminishes abruptly in the shape of a speaking trumpet. The extreme height of the building above the level of the country is 361 feet. On the top is an iron tee or umbrella, 56 feet in circumference, which is gilt, and it was formerly the intention of the king to gild the whole building. On the north side of the building are three large bells of good workmanship, suspended near the ground, to announce to the spirit of the Gaudma the approach of a suppliant, who places his offering, consisting of boiled rice, a plate of sweetmeats, or a cocoanut fried in oil, on the bench near the foot of the temple. After it is offered, the devotee seems indifferent what becomes of it, and it is often devoured before his face by crows or dogs, whom he never attempts to disturb during their repast. Numberless images of Gaudma lie scattered

about. A pious Burman who purchases an idol, first procures the ceremony of consecration to be performed by the Rhahaans or monks; he then takes his purchase to whatever sacred building is most conveniently situated, and there places it within a kioum, or on the open ground before the temple: nor does he seem to have the least anxiety about its future preservation. Some of these idols are made of marble found in the neighbourhood of Ummerapoora, and capable of receiving a very fine polish; many are of wood gilded, and a few of silver; the last, however, are not exposed like the others. Silver and gold are rarely used, except in the composition of household gods. The Rhahaans assert, that the temple of Shoemadoo Praw was began 2,300 years ago, and built by the exertions of successive monarchs.

About 40 miles from the town of Pegu are the Galladzet hills, remarkable for their pestilential atmosphere. Around the town a few miserable villages, with very little cultivation, shew the misery of the peasants. Rice, gnapee (a species of sprat which, when half putrified, is made into a pickle, and eaten as a seasoning with rice), oil expressed from a small grain, and salt, are almost their only articles of food. They have cattle, but they do not eat the flesh; and, what is more extraordinary, seldom drink the milk. The cows are diminutive, resembling those on the coast of Coromandel; but the buffaloes are generally equal to those of Hindostan. The only article of consequence manufactured at Pegu is silk and cotton, which the females weave for domestic use. The thread is well spun, and

the texture of the web close and strong, and chequered like tartan. The chief officers in Pegu are the maywoon (viceroy), the raywoon, the chekey, and the seredogee. These officers exercise the functions of magistrate, and hold separate courts at their own houses for the determination of petty suits; but this private jurisdiction is very limited. All causes of importance relating to property are tried in open court. The three inferior officers above mentioned united from a tribunal, which sits in the rhoon, or public hall of justice, where they hear parties, examine witnesses, and take depositions in writing. These documents are sent to the Viceroy, and the judges transmit their opinions along with the evidence, which the Viceroy either confirms or rejects, and in case of conviction, orders execution or pardons the criminal.—*Symes, &c.*

ARRACAN (*Rakhang*).—A large province of the Burman empire, which extends along the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal from the river Nauf in Chittagong, as far south as Cape Negrais, where the ancient Pegu empire commenced. Arracan is, in fact, a continuation of the Chittagong plain, bounded on the east by a high range of mountains, which, towards the south, approaches so near the sea, that though its length may be estimated at 500 miles, in many places the breadth from the shore does not exceed 10, and nowhere more than 100 miles. From the side of Chittagong, entrance into Arracan must be effected by a march along the sea beach, interrupted by several channels, which chiefly owe their waters to the action of the tide. From the quarter of Negrais and Bassien, Arracan can

only be invaded by water, owing to the numerous rivers that intersect the country adjacent to the sea. Cheduba, Ramree, Arracan, and Sandoway, form distinct jurisdictions, and comprehend the whole of the Arracan territory. The sea coast of this tract is studded with islands of different sizes and numerous clusters of rocks, that lie at a small distance from the shore, many of which exhibit a striking resemblance to the forms of different animals. Behind these islands the country, as viewed from the sea, appears agreeably diversified with hill and dale; the former covered with trees, and numerous torrents descending from the hills flow to the west. By Abul Fazel in 1582, this country is described as follows :—" To the south-east is a large country named Arkung, to which the port or bunder of Chittagong properly belongs. Here are plenty of elephants, but great scarcity of horses."

Although the position of the Great Arracan rivers is favourable, and report speaks well of its depth of water and safety of entrance, yet no authentic or accurate account has as yet been obtained of it, notwithstanding, it is certain that the English had a factory here in the 18th century. This situation for a harbour has a great many apparent advantages. In the first place, it is a fertile and well inhabited country, abounding in cattle, goats, fowls, fish, and all kinds of provision. It has great store of timber, similar to that procured in Chittagong, which although not the best for ship building, yet would suit for repairs in time of urgent necessity; besides, its vicinity to Pegu rendering the accumulation of teak timber particularly easy. Owing to the po-

sition of the Arracan chain of hills, there is strong reason to suppose that that valuable wood is also produced among them, and might be floated down the Arracan river. But the great advantage of this river is its easy communication with Bengal, both by land and by sea, so that it could be supplied with stores and provisions in small sloops or boats during the north-east monsoon, and from Chittagong there is a road that can be travelled at all seasons of the year, which ensures the practicability of supporting the station, which is only about 70 miles distant from the frontiers of Chittagong. The Arracan river, however, has this disadvantage, that during the whole of the south-west monsoon, it must be approached with great caution, as at a considerable distance from its entrance, both to the northward and southward, there are many dangerous rocks and sands, the positions of which are not well ascertained. Owing also to the strength with which the monsoon blows on the eastern shore, and the heavy sea that is thrown in from the great length of range; and, above all, to a current, which during the season has been found to follow the course of the prevailing winds, there is reason to believe that a ship could not get out of the Arracan river during the whole of the S. W. monsoon, probably many of these dangers might be obviated were the coast better known.

Respecting the interior of Arracan very little is known; but it is supposed to be very similar to that of Chittagong, which it so greatly resembles on the sea coast. A considerable intercourse subsists between the maritime tract and the Ben-

gal districts, especially Chittagong, into which ponies, elephants' teeth, wax, gold and silver are imported from Arracan, where the Rajah or Viceroy for the time being is always the chief merchant. In peaceable times, there are from 40 to 50 boats, of 500 maunds burthen, equipped annually by merchants who travel across the country from Ummerapoor, Chagaing, and other cities in the Ava dominions, for the Bengal trade. Each boat may be valued at 4,000 rupees capital, principally in silver bullion. One half of these boats return with red betel nut, and this trade is so systematically established, that they even farm the betel nut plantations about Luckipoor. The principal exports from Arracan besides bullion, are salt, bees' wax, elephants' teeth, and rice; the last of which is produced in great abundance, and the contiguous islands are uncommonly fruitful. Many Burman boats also navigating during the north-west monsoon proceed from Bassien, Rangoon, and Martaban, along the Arracan coast, and make an annual voyage to Chittagong, Dacca, and Calcutta, where they dispose of their cargo, and return with Indian and European commodities. Prior to 1764, the Dutch used to purchase rice and slaves here. Latterly, on account of the increasing tyranny of the Burman government, this province has so greatly deteriorated, that in 1812 it was stated by Colonel Morgan, the commanding officer in Chittagong, that the Burmans had no means of subsisting any considerable body of troops within 150 miles of the Chittagong southern frontier, as nearly the whole of the cattle had been driven off, maimed, or slaughtered, by the insur-

gent King Berring. The jack, mangoe, betel nut, and other fruit trees, had been cut down, and all the grain either destroyed or removed.

The natives of Arracan Proper call their country Yekein; the Hindoos of Bengal, Ros-saun. The latter, who have settled in great numbers in Arracan, are denominated by the original inhabitants Kulaw Yekein, or unnaturalized Arracaners. The Moguls know this country by the name of Rakhang, and the Mahomedans who have been long settled in the country, call themselves Rooinga, or natives of Arracan. The term Mugh is never used by the natives of Arracan as applicable to themselves, and its origin has never been properly ascertained. The Rakhing is the original language of the inhabitants of Arracan, who adhere to the tenets of Buddha, and is the first of that singular class of Indo-Chinese languages which may be properly termed monosyllabic, from the mass of their radical words consisting of monosyllables, like the spoken dialect of China. Until the last conquest by the Burmans, the tribes of Arracan seem for a long period to have preserved their independence; their language is consequently purer than that of the Burmans, who sustained various revolutions. The national name of the Arracan race is Ma-rum-ma, which appears to be only a corruption of Maha Vurma; Vurma being an appellation peculiar to tribes of Khetri extraction. A native of Arracan cannot, without extreme difficulty, articulate a word which has a consonant for a final.

Until the Burman conquest, the ancient government of Arracan had never been so com-



pletely subdued as to acknowledge vassalage to a foreign power, although the Moguls and Peguers had, at different periods, carried arms into the heart of the country. During the reign of Aurengzebe, the unfortunate Sultan Shujah, his brother, was basely murdered by the Arracan Raja. The Portuguese sometimes as allies, at others as open enemies, gained an establishment in the country, which only decayed with the general ruin of their interests in Asia. In 1783, the province was conquered after a very feeble resistance by the Burmans, and was followed by the surrender of Cheduba, Ramree, and the Broken Isles. Many of the Mughls, preferring flight to servitude, took refuge among the Dumbuck hills, on the western border of Chittagong, and in the deep jungles and forests that skirt that frontier, where they formed themselves into tribes of independant robbers. Many also settled in the Chittagong and Tipperah districts, while others quietly submitted to the yoke. When the conquest of Arracan had been thus completed, it was formed into a province of the Burman empire, and a Maywoon or Viceroy deputed to govern it. Sholamboo was the first invested with that office, and 1,000 Burman soldiers were left to garrison the fort. Small parties were likewise distributed in the different towns, and many Burmans who had obtained grants of land came with their families and settled in the country, thereby consolidating the Burman supremacy. The dethroned Raja, Mahasumda, died a natural death, in the first year of his captivity, and thus the subjugation of Arracan was accomplished in a few months.

In this state of apparent tranquillity it remained until the year 1811, when a native of Arracan, named King Berring (King-ber-ring), formed the design of embodying his followers and other refugee Mughs to invade his native province, which project he actually carried into execution in the month of May 1811. He was afterwards joined by many Arracaners, advanced into the interior, and in a short time subjected the whole to his authority, with the exception of the capital, to which he laid siege. While these achievements were going on, he addressed a letter to the British government offering to become their tributary, which was rejected; but in order to induce a supposition of a connexion or connivance, he had some of his followers clothed in red. Some time afterwards the Burmans collected forces sufficient to defeat King Berring and disperse his followers, who fled towards Chittagong followed by the Burmans, who pursued them across the frontier, but were compelled to return by a British detachment sent against them. In 1812, King Berring again emerged from his concealment, and once more attempted the invasion of Arracan, but even with worse success than before, being met and defeated by the Burman troops immediately after crossing the frontier. During the commotions no quarter was given; every suspected Mugh was put to death, and one dispatch mentions the total extermination of a village containing 2,500 persons. On the decease of the Arracan Viceroy in 1813, the governors of Rane, Cheduba, and Sandoway, with some other functionaries, were directed by the Ava sovereign to officiate

in the province until the arrival of a successor. This took place in 1814, in which year, in consequence of the intrusion of some Burman troops within the Chittagong boundaries, in pursuit of the insurgent King Berring, a correspondence ensued between the magistrate of that district and the Arracan Viceroy, the commencement of whose letter, as a specimen of the Burman official style, is here inserted:—  
 “My sovereign is of high destiny; he possesses gold, diamonds, and jewels, and the white elephant and the whole world. He possesses great resolution and great power; he possesses the spear; he is king over 100 kings, &c. &c.”  
 The impunity granted on these occasions to the Burmans is entirely to be ascribed to the moderation and forbearance of the British government, which made every exertion and incurred a heavy expenditure by their endeavours to expel the refugee Mughhs. The task, however, was difficult, owing to the physical nature of the country and its pestilential atmosphere, combined with the inveterate hatred which these fugitives, who are an athletic hard-working race, bear to the whole Burman nation, and the strong hopes they still entertain of restoring their country to its former independence.—*Symes, Public MS. Documents, Morgan, Cox, Leyden, F. Buchanan, Towers, &c.*

ARRACAN.—The capital of the Arracan province, situated about two days' journey from the mouth of the river of the same name. Lat. 29° 40' N. long. 93° 5' E. In 1812, the town of Arracan was described to Colonel Morgan by his Mugh Moonshees, as being built all around

the fort except on the north-east face, where a large jeel or shallow lake approaches it. According to the same authorities, the fort is built in the form of an irregular square, and has three walls of hard stone, one within the other, in height about 36 feet, and 12 thick at the bottom, tapering to 5 at the top, and extending from height to height over even spots of ground; but the whole of these walls are without ditches. Four hills or elevations approach the walls of the fort; the largest and highest is called Rooce Tunge; the second in height, Harree-tunge; the third, Pointectunge; and the fourth, Baboo-tunge; the whole of which command the interior of the fort, which might be easily reduced by 2,000 sepoys with a small battering train. At the mouth of the Oorotung, or Great Arracan river, there is said to be no bar, and it is reported to be a mile broad in the dry season; the depth from the sea up to Jehauz ghaut from 6 to 18 fathoms, and there are said to be no shoals capable of hindering the ascent of large ships with the flood tides. A light boat requires two days to row up from the mouth of the river to Jehauz ghaut.

This town and fort were taken by the Burmans in 1783, after a feeble resistance. They found a considerable booty; but on nothing was a higher value placed than an image of Gaudma (the Gautama of the Hindoos,) made of brass and highly burnished. The figure is about ten feet high, in a sitting posture, with the legs crossed and feet inverted, the left hand resting on the lap, the right pendent. This image is believed to be the original resemblance of the

Reeshee (saint) taken from life, and it is so highly venerated, that pilgrims have for centuries been accustomed to come from the remotest countries, where the supremacy of Gaudma is acknowledged, to pay their devotions at the feet of his brazen representative. There are also five images of Racshyas (the demons of the Hindoos) of the same metal, and of gigantic stature, the guardians of the sanctuary. A singular piece of ordnance of most enormous dimensions was also found, composed of huge bars of iron beaten into form. This ponderous cannon measured 30 feet in length,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in diameter at the mouth, and 10 inches in the calibre. It was transported by the Burmans to Ummerapoorah by water, as a military trophy; and Gaudma, with his infernal guards, were in like manner conveyed to the capital with much pomp and superstitious parade.—*Symes, Morgan, &c.*

CHEDUBA ISLE.—An island in the Bay of Bengal, lying off the coast of Arracan, about one degree and a half to the southward of the Great Arracan river. It is most westerly of a cluster of islands, and is of a moderate height, with several hummocks on it. This island lies but a few miles from the main land, and within it there is said to be a good harbour; but it has the same disadvantage of a lee-shore that the Arracan river has. Both Cheduba and the more eastern islands are inhabited, and in peaceable times produce such quantities of rice, that ships of any burthen may load that article here. The channel between this island and the main is annually navigated by trading boats, but it does not afford a safe passage for large shipping. It

is governed by a Chekey, or Lieutenant, deputed by the Burman government, who was expelled in 1810 by the Arracan insurgents, but it was subsequently recaptured after a war-boat battle, in which the Burmans were victorious.—*Symes, Elmore, &c. &c.*

After the conclusion of Peace, with the Burmese in 1826, the conquered provinces of Arracan, Ramree, Cheduba, Sandoway, and the Tenasserim Provinces including Tavoy and Mergui in the South are retained by the British Government up to the present period.

**PROME.**—A town in the Burman dominions, situated on the east side of the Irawaddy, named also Peeage Mew. Lat.  $18^{\circ} 50'$  N. long.  $95^{\circ}$ . This city was the original and natural boundary of the Burman empire to the south, although conquest has stretched their dominions several degrees further. In 1795, Prome was larger and more populous than Rangoon, having been then estimated to contain 40,000 inhabitants; but, in 1809, it exhibited a very different appearance, as the houses were deserted, and the shops shut; the remaining population consisted mostly of old men, women, and children.

**BAMOO.**—A town in the northern quarter of the Burman empire, only 20 miles from the frontiers of the province of Yunnan in China. Lat.  $24^{\circ}$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 56'$  E. This town and district attached to it were taken from the Chinese by the Burmans since the accession of the present dynasty. The road from this town to Manchew-jee or Yunnan lies through mountains, and it is the usual route of the Burman envoys going to Peking.—*Symes, &c.*

**MONCHABOO.**—This town is of small size, but much venerated by the Burmans as the birth-place of Alompra the founder of the present dynasty, and during his short and active reign, the capital. Lat.  $22^{\circ} 40'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 20'$  E. The distance from Rangoon to Monchaboo by the Irrawaddy is 500 miles.—*Symes, &c.*

**SILLAHMEW.**—In 1795, this was a large town, shaded by wide spreading trees, embellished with temples, and remarkable for its manufactures of silk, the raw material for which was procured from the province of Yunan, in China. The colours are bright and beautiful, but do not appear durable; the texture is close and strong, and the fabric is said to wear much longer than any from China or Hindostan, but the price is in proportion high. When examined by the British mission in 1809, the numerous pagodas and religious buildings indicated the extent and late importance of the town; but, with the exception of one old woman, not an inhabitant remained. A great proportion of the males who had reached the age of puberty had been compelled to recruit the army then acting against the Siamese, and being thus left defenceless, it fell a prey to the insurgent Nakonek, who completed its ruin. Lat.  $20^{\circ} 50'$  N. long.  $94^{\circ} 30'$  E. — *Symes, Canning, &c.*

**SHEMBIGHAWN.**—This is a town of considerable importance, as from hence the road from Ava branches off to the town of Arracan, which is eight days' journey distant. The road over the mountains is said to be practicable for horses and bullocks, but not for wheeled carriages. Shembighewn is situated on the banks of the

Irawaddy. Lat.  $20^{\circ} 48'$  N. long.  $4^{\circ} 93'$  E.—*Symes, &c.*

YANANGHEOUM.—A town in the Burman dominions, situated on the left bank of the Irawaddy. Lat.  $20^{\circ} 28'$  N. long.  $94^{\circ} 35'$  E. Five miles east of Yanangheoum are the celebrated petroleum wells, which supply the whole Burman empire, and many parts of India, with this useful production. The town is chiefly inhabited by potters, who carry on an extensive manufacture of earthenware. There are here a great many oil pits within a small compass, the aperture being generally four feet square, and lined with timber. The oil is drawn up with an iron pot fastened to a rope, passed over a wooden cylinder revolving on an axis supported by two upright posts. When the pot is filled, two men take the rope and run down a declivity; the pot is afterwards emptied into a cistern, and the water drawn off by a hole at the bottom. The depth of the pits is about 37 fathoms, so that the quantity they contain cannot be seen. When a well is exhausted, they restore the spring by cutting deeper into the rock which is extremely hard. The Burman government farms out the ground that supplies the oil, and it becomes subject to adventurers, who dig the wells at their own hazard. The commodity is sold very cheap on the spot, the principal expense being the transportation charges, and the cost of the earthen pots to hold it.—*Symes, &c.*

MEEGHEOUNG YAY.—This town stands on the east side of the Irawaddy, and in 1795 was a place of considerable trade, from which rice, garlick, onions and oil were exported. Lat.  $19^{\circ} 53'$  N. long.  $94^{\circ} 50'$  E.



**PEINHGEE.**—A town in the Burman territories, situated on the west side of the Irawaddy. Lat.  $18^{\circ} 31' N.$  long  $94^{\circ} 50' E.$  In the vicinity of this place a great part of the teak timber is procured which is carried to Rangoon and from thence exported to the British provinces. The forests extend along the western mountains, and are in sight from the river. The trees are felled in the dry season, and when the monsoon sets in are borne down by the current of the Irawaddy. Here, also, ships of 400 tons burthen are frequently built, although the distance from Rangoon, including the windings of the river, be 150 miles.—*Symes, &c.*

**MEYAHOO.**—An ancient town in the Burman dominions, formerly named Loonzay and famous during the wars between the Burmans and Peguers, until the latter were reduced to subjection. Lat.  $18^{\circ} 19' N.$  long.  $95^{\circ} 8' E.$  When visited by Colonel Symes in 1795, this town extended two miles along the western margin of the Irawaddy, and was distinguished by numerous gilded spires and spacious convents. The vicinity is uncommonly fertile in rice, and from hence a large quantity is annually exported to the metropolis. The Burman sovereign has here spacious granaries built of wood, and always kept replenished with grain ready to be transported to any part of the empire when a scarcity occurs, which is not unfrequent in the upper provinces where the periodical rains are not so copious, nor so certain as in the southern districts. In 1809, this, like all the other Burman towns, had undergone a general decay; the population had diminished to 1,000 persons, and boat building

from 200 to 40, while the quays, instead of 200, presented to the inspection of the embassy only 60 or 70, apparently rotting for want of employment. To complete its misfortunes, on the 1st of January, 1810, the town with all its boats and sheds was totally burned to ashes.—*Symes, Canning, &c.*

TONGHO.—A town, district, and fortress in the Burman dominions, the last accounted a place of uncommon strength. Lat  $18^{\circ} 50'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 40'$  E. The province of Tongho is said to be rich and populous, and is usually governed by one of the sons of the Burman monarch, who takes his title from it, being called the Tonghy Teekien, or prince of Tongho. The inhabitants excel in the manufacture of cotton cloth, and the land produces the best betel nut in the empire. In this luxury the Burmans of all ranks indulge so freely, that it has become with them almost a necessary of life. The natives of Tongho are famous for their licentiousness and ferocity, and among the Burmans notorious for their insolence and dishonesty.—*Symes, &c.*

SYRIAM.—In the year 1744, the British factory at this place was destroyed by the contending parties during the wars of the Burmans and Peguers, which were then, as they have always been, carried on with the most savage ferocity. The town is situated close to Rangoon, in lat.  $16^{\circ} 49'$  N. long.  $96^{\circ} 17'$  E.

PERSAIM (or *Bassien*).—In 1757, a piece of land opposite to Persaim was granted by Alompra to the East India Company, for the purpose of erecting a factory. Lat.  $16^{\circ} 50'$  N. long.  $95^{\circ}$  E.

**IRAWADDY RIVER.** (*Iravati*).—A great river of the Burman empire, the source of which has never been explored, but which is supposed to be in the eastern quarter of Tibet. The course of the Irawaddy is nearly north and south, and it is to the Ava dominions what the Ganges is to Bengal, at once a source of fertilization and of inland navigation, connecting the different provinces from the frontiers of Tibet and China to the sea. The swelling of the Irawaddy is not influenced by the quantity of rain that falls in the low countries; but by the heavy showers in the mountainous part of its track. Whilst the drought in the champaign districts is very great, the river rises to its usual height; the part of the country near the city of Ava being rarely refreshed by copious rains, but, like Egypt, depends on the overflowing of its river for a supply of moisture. In the months of June, July, and August, the river, which in the hot and dry season winds over its sandy bed, a slow and sluggish stream, swells over its banks and inundates the adjacent country. The current is very impetuous, but is counteracted by the strength of the south-west monsoou. During the monsoon months it rises and subsides several times.

Notwithstanding the general name of the river is Irawaddy, yet different parts of it are distinguished by different names, taken from places of note on its banks. The term is wholly Hindoo, being the name of Indra's elephant. At Ummerapoora even in the dry season, the principal branch of the Irawaddy is a mile broad. Its waters possess the quality of petri-

lying wood in a vary high degree. From Dr. Francis Buchanan's geographical researches while in Ava, it appears, that the river coming from Tibet, which was supposed to be that of Arracan, is in fact the Keenduem, or great western branch of the Irawaddy; and that which was supposed to be the western branch is in reality the eastern one, which passes by Ava, and runs to the south, keeping west from the province of Yunan in China.—*Symes, F. Buchanan, &c.*

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## DESCRIPTION OF DIFFERENT

TRIBES INHABITING IN AND AROUND THE  
BURMAN EMPIRE,

*Extracted from the Travels of Howard Malcom, who sailed from America in September 1835, on an Expedition to explore new field of Missionary Enterprise in the East.*

1. **BURMAH PROPER** contains about 3,000,000 of inhabitants to whom the language is vernacular. Information as to these is so amply furnished in this work and missionary periodicals, that nothing need here be said. For these, there are at Ava, Messrs. Kincaid and Simons, and at Rangoon, Messrs Webb and Howard. Stations might be formed at Chagaing, Ummerna-poor, Bamoo, Mogoung, Prome, Bassein, and other important places. At least ten missionaries are now needed for Burmah Proper.

2. The **PEGUANS**, called by Burmans *Talains*, or *Talings*, and by themselves *Moons*, amount to more than 70,000 souls. Their language has

been very much superseded by the Burman; the men speaking it in all their business, most of such as learn to read, doing so in Burman. It will not be proper to expend missionary time and money in preserving it from extinction; but as many of the females speak only Peguan, and all can understand it better than Burman, it will be necessary to preach the gospel in their language, and perhaps print a few books. At least one missionary, therefore, is wanted to sustain and succeed Mr. Haswell, who now occupies this department and is located at Amherst.

3. The TENASSERIM PROVINCES (as the British possession south of Rangoon are called,) contain about 100,000 souls. For the *Burman* part of these, the labourers are Messrs Judson,\* Osgood, Hancock, and Bennett. Mr. Judson is wholly engrossed with translations and tracts, and in the pastorship of the native church; Messrs Osgood and Hancock are printers; and Mr. Bennett has full employ in the government school. There is therefore not a single effective out-door missionary to this whole people, nor one on the ground preparing to become so! Maulmain, Tavoy, and Mergui, should each immediately have a missionary devoted to public services.

4. In ARRACAN, containing 300,000, there is only Mr. Comstock, stationed at Kyoek Phyoo. The population is twice that of the Sandwich Islands. Ramree and Sandoway ought at once to be occupied. These stations should at least

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\* Since dead.

have two missionaries each. The Rev. Mr. Ingalls is designated to one of them.

5. The **KARENS** inhabit all the mountain regions of the southern and eastern portions of Burman Proper, and all parts of the Tenasserim provinces extending into the western portion of Siam, and thence northward among the Shyans. It is impossible to form a satisfactory estimate of their number. In the province of Tavoy, a British consul makes the number 2,500. Around Maulmain and Rangoon, there are perhaps 29,000 more. In Siam and Lao there are probably 10,000; making in all about 33,000.

There are known to be at least two different tribes, speaking diverse dialects, namely, the *Sgaws* or *Chegaws*, and the *Pos* or *Pgwos*. The former reside chiefly in the Tenasserim provinces, and are called by the Burmans *Myet-ho*. Their language has been reduced to writing, in the Burman character, by Mr. Wade. Among this tribe have occurred those triumphs of Christianity which have been so remarkable, and with which all the friends of missions are acquainted. The *Po* tribe (called by the Burmans *Myet-kyan*) reside in Pegu, and have adopted many of the words and habits of the Talins. With this tribe Miss Macomber has commenced labours.

Missionaries knew nothing more of these people than that there were such, until the visit of the sorcerer in April, 1828. The heart of Boardman was immediately touched with sympathy, and his judgment convinced that Providence pointed them out as entitled to his future labours. An early visit to their jungle con-

firmed him in his decision; and thenceforth his life was spent in their cause. On his second tour, he was called from his labour, amid those touching scenes described in his memoir; having seen nearly seventy persons added to the church. He died February 11, 1831. Mr and Mrs Mason had joined the mission in the preceding January; and Mr and Mrs Wade, returning from America with Miss Gardner, were added in 1835.

The Tavoy station has hitherto been made almost wholly subservient to the interests of this people. God has opened among them an effectual door of entrance, and granted them the services of as devoted missionaries as have ever blessed a people. In July 1836, they had in charge five Karen churches, embracing nearly 350 members, more than 20 native assistants, about 200 inquirers connected with the several congregations, and 15 schools. Mr Abbott is now successfully labouring here with Mr Vinton.

There are three churches, not far from each other, about forty miles north of Rangoon; namely, *Mawbee*, *Yea-tho*, or *Ray-tho*, and *Poung-nen*, or *Ponan*. These have been founded wholly by native assistants, and have for several years walked steadfastly in the truth. They have endured the spoiling of their goods and cruel tortures, and live amid continual threats of violence from the Burman officers, but not one among several hundreds has drawn back through fear, though a few have relapsed into sin, as might be expected.

We have been perhaps too much disposed to esteem the importance of a mission in proportion to the amount of population. We ought rather to regard the indications of Providence.

In this aspect, so far as I know, no other mission of modern times holds out such encouragements.

The several sections of Karens have each some peculiarities, but such general similarity that they may be described together.

Their houses are like the Burmans', only much higher from the ground; and as there is little distinction of rich or poor, the model, dimensions, and materials, differ but slightly. They cost only a few days' labour, and are admirably suited to the climate. One of the rooms has a hearth for cooking, made by laying earth in a shallow box. Chimneys are unknown; but the high roof and open floor prevent all inconvenience on account of smoke. Each has a veranda, or porch, raised to the same height as the floor of the house, where much of the laborious work is done. The loom, agricultural implements, &c. as well as the fowls and pigs, find a place under the house.

They cultivate the ground with more care and success than Burmans, and furnish no small part of the rice consumed in the country. Their instruments of tillage are, however, particularly rude. Having no plough, they are unable to prepare the soil for a second crop on account of its baking hard. Their custom is, therefore, to clear and burn over a new spot every year; which, being soft and light, and stimulated by the ashes left upon it, yields largely. Hence in part arises their habit of roving from place to place. They raise hogs and poultry in abundance, so that with honey (obtained plentifully from wild bees), fish, esculents, and indigenous fruits, they have no want of the



necessaries of life. Many of them are expert with the bow and arrow, and shoot guianas, monkeys, squirrels, and other game common in their forests. They seem to exempt nothing from their catalogue of meats. Animals which have died of themselves, or game killed with poisoned arrows, are not the less acceptable. When I have expressed disgust at the swollen and revolting condition of such meat, they seemed to wonder what could be the nature of my objections.

Their dress forms a more complete covering to the body than that of the Burmans, but is neither so graceful nor of so rich materials. The universal robe, for both sexes, is a strong cotton shirt, made loose, without sleeves, and descending a little below the knees. Women wear beneath this a petticoat, descending to the ankles, but young girls and old women dispense with this last garment. The women are distinguishable chiefly by their turban, which is made of a long, narrow, figured scarf, with the fringed ends thrown back, and falling gracefully on the shoulders.

They are exceeding fond of ornaments, and wear a great variety on the neck, arms, and ankles. Some of these necklaces are made of the hard, dry wing of a magnificent beetle, found in their forests. A young lady, of special pretensions, will sometimes wear ten or fifteen necklaces of various kinds, often suspending a little bell to the longest, so that she has "music wherever she goes." They never wear silk, and seldom any foreign fabric except book muslin, which some of the men wear for turbans, in the

same manner as the Burman. Their ears are not only bored, but the aperture so stretched as to become in many cases, capable of containing a cylinder the size of a dollar. When women have obtained an age when such ornaments cease to be valued, this great empty wrinkled aperture has a disagreeable aspect.

Their domestic manners are less exceptionable than those of most heathen. Truth, integrity, and hospitality, are universal. For a Karen to lie or cheat, is scarcely known. Females are in no respect degraded. They are neither secluded nor kept at an unseemly distance, nor required to perform labour beyond their strength, nor treated with severity. Polygamy, though allowed by the government under which they live, is accounted dishonourable, and seldom occurs. Their distinguishing vice is intemperance. Unrestrained by religious prohibitions, men, women, and children use strong drink, and the miserable consequences are seen in every village. The Christians are of course emancipated from this baneful practice.

In musical taste and skill they excel all the other orientals with whom I became acquainted, although their instruments are few and rude. Young and old practise vocal music on all occasions, and the psalmody of the disciples is truly delightful. Every word in the language ending with a vowel, renders their versification peculiarly soft.

Their manufactures, though few, comprehend all the articles in use among themselves. Without the advantage of a regular loom, they make excellent cotton fabrics, often with beautiful figures. One end of the warp is fastened to a

post of the house or a tree, and the other wrapped round the waist. A neat shuttle holds the woof, but the figures are interwoven with the fingers.

None of the tributaries to Burmah have been so oppressed as this inoffensive people. Their regular taxes amount to twelve or fifteen rupees annually for each family, besides which their goods are taken, without restraint, at any time; and where public labour is to be done, they are called out by hundreds, without compensation or provisions. Many die of fatigue and suffering on these occasions. They are, however, allowed to have their own head-men, who decide minor disputes, and may inflict minor punishments.

As to religion, the Karens may be almost said to have none. Individuals of course will have religious anxieties, and these make prayer and offerings to the Nao-pu-ee, or Nats. In ordinary times, they make offerings to these of a little boiled rice laid on a board near the house. In periods of distress, a hog is offered. The mode of doing this is to chase him round, beating him with clubs till nearly dead, and then dispatching him by thrusting a sharp stick down his throat. Though so little is done to propitiate the Nats, the fear of them is universal, and gives rise to a multitude of such stories as infest our nurseries. Through fear of them, most Karens "are all their life time subject to bondage."

Various traditions prevail among them which have a remarkable similarity to Scripture facts. The following is a specimen: "Our race began with a married pair, who lived in happy innocence and abundance. Mo-kaw-le, or the devils, at-

tempted to seduce them to partake of certain food which they had been commanded not to eat. They both listened and argued for some time, till the man, indignant and out of patience, would hear no more, and rising up, went away. The woman continued to listen. Mokawle assured her that if she would take his advice, she should know all things, and be endued with ability to fly in the air, or penetrate into the depth of the earth. That she might prove the truth of what he said, he begged her just to taste the least morsel, and she would know for herself. She began to hesitate, and said, 'Shall we verily be able to fly?' Upon this, Mokawle redoubled his protestations or ardent good will, and repeated the most flattering assurances, till the woman ate. Mokawle then praised and cajoled her, till she was induced to go and find her husband. He yielded reluctantly, and after much coaxing. They realised none of the promised advantages, but felt no difference in themselves till next day, when God came and cursed them, saying, "You shall become old; you shall be sick; you shall die."

The only religious teachers are a sort of prophets called *Bookhoos*, who predict events, and are greatly venerated by the people. They are always bards, singing with uncommon skill, sometimes extemporaneously, verses of their own composition. The uniform burden of the prophecies is the coming of a deliverer, who is to gather their scattered tribes, and restore them to security and independence.

Besides these is a set of wizards, called *Wees*, who are far less respectable, but more numerous, and more dreaded. *Bookhoos* frequently become

Wees, but there are many Wees who are never Bookhoos. They pretend to cure diseases, to know men's thoughts, and to converse with the spirits. Their performances are fraught with awe and terror to a superstitious people. They begin with solemn and mysterious movements: presently their eyes roll wildly; then their body trembles; and at length every muscle is agitated; while with frantic looks and foaming mouth they utter oracles, or speak to a man's spirit and declare its responses.

Let us now turn to the rest of this great field, in no part of which, except at Assam, is there a single missionary of any persuasion.

6. The SHYANS, *Shans*, or *Laos*—Geographers and historians know little of this numerous people, not even the number and location of their various tribes. The accounts of La Bissachere, Jarrie, Westhoff, Kempfer and Marini, are rendered worthless by the contradictoriness of their statements, the confusion of their dissimilar orthography, and the changes which have occurred since their day.

No modern traveller has explored the country. Dr. Richardson alone has seen any considerable part of it. He communicated many facts respecting the Shyans of the region of Zemmai; but his whole account has been published in the Asiatic Journal, to which, if the reader please, he may refer. I spent many hours in examining intelligent officers and traders whom I met at different places, and gathered some facts from the Shyan princes to whom Colonel Burney introduced me at Ava, but as memorandums became voluminous, they became also contradictory; so that, instead

of giving an entire chapter on this people, as I had intendéd, I shall venture only a few paragraphs.

The Shyae or Lao country is bounded by Assam on the north, China on the east, Siam and Camboja on the south, and Burmah on the west. The entire length of the country is about 900 miles, and the greatest breadth about 400. The population is probably not much short of 3,000,000. *Shyan* is a Burman name, and *Low*, or *Lao*, the Chinese, which is adopted by the Portuguese. They call themselves *Tay* (pronounced *Tie*), and their language often bears that name in books. They seem to be the parent stock of both Assamese and Siamese. Indeed, the name shows identity. Bengalese always put a vowel before every word, and make *m* and *n* convertible; so that *Shyan* becomes with them *A-syum*, which the English further altered to *Assam*. *Syam*, or *Siam*, is but another form of the same word.

The Shyans are divided into many tribes, and the language has a corresponding number of dialects. They have no alphabetical characters of their own; but a few individuals write their language in the Bengalee or Burman letters. The Roman letters have been wisely adopted by the missionaries at Sudiya. Readers will thus be more easily raised up, and vast expense saved to the mission. If the same plan be pursued in giving letters to the numerous tribes now to be mentioned, a happy uniformity in proper names, &c. will pervade all this region, and the diffusion of the Word hastened by many years.

It is impossible to enumerate the different tribes. Their chief designations seem to be from the regions they inhabit.

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The *Cassay* or *Kathe Shyans* occupy a country sometimes called Nora, on the head waters of the Kyenduem. The *northern Laos* inhabit the sources of the Meinam or Siam river. Their principal city is Kaintoun. The *Mrelap* or *Myelop Shyans* occupy the region between the upper part of the Irawaddy and China, and are sometimes called Shyan Waws. Their chief towns are Momeit, Thennee, and Monay; from each of which are annual caravans to Ava. The *Tarouk* or *Chinese Shyans* reside chiefly in China. They are sometimes called *Ko-shyan-pye*, or the "nine tribe Shyans." The *Yudshyans* appear to be the Jangomas of the Modern Universal History. Perhaps they are the same as the Tarouk Shyans. The *Zemmai Shyans* occupy the region round the city of that name and are less connected with Burmah than with Siam. Their Chobwaw is in reality monarch, and holds a very dubious fealty to his more powerful neighbour. The city of Zemmai is on the head waters of the Meinam, fifteen days from Bangkok by boat. Dr. Richardson speaks highly of the mildness, intelligence, and purity of the people, and of the pre-eminent salubrity of the climate. The *Lowa Shyans* are numerously scattered over the southern portion of the Lao country, and stand high for intelligence and prosperity. One of the Woongees at Ava assured me there were no Lowa Shyans, but that the people so called are only Lowas, scattered among Shyans, but I am led to believe he was mistaken. I saw at Maulmain some very intelligent traders who called themselves Lowa Shyans, and gave me a list of twelve or fourteen of their principal

towns. The *Lenzenr*, or *Southern Shyans*, border on Siam and Camboja, and seem to be the people called by the old writers *Lonchan* or *Vinchang*. They were conquered in 1829 by the Siamese, and their king carried in chains to Bangkok. Their chief town is Sandapuri.

The Shyans are in some respects a more interesting people and more civilised than the Burmans. Such of their manufactures as I saw were greatly superior, and the common dress is much more artificial and convenient. They wear round jackets, short full trousers, and broad-brimmed hats, dressing, in fact, much like the Chinese. Though occasionally reduced and overrun by their neighbours, they have as yet maintained a virtual independence, and have to a great degree avoided these internal wars which have reduced the North American Indians to such weakness and diminution. Some of the tribes adhere to the ancient demon worship, but most of them have embraced Boodhism. Eight or ten missionaries might at once be settled advantageously in large cities, and would form an important advance upon China. One should be stationed at Ava or Ummerapoorra, where he would have access to very large numbers, and where his operations would probably create no displeasure on the part of the government.

7. The *TOUNG-THOOS* are sometimes called *Tampees*. A few reside in scattered villages on the Salween river, near Maulmain, but most of them to the northward. They amount probably to 20,000. The northern portions are said to have a written language, and books in the Burman character. The southern portion seem



wholly ignorant of letters, except a few, who read and write Burman. Their name, which signifies "southern people," was probably given them about Ava. The name they themselves give their tribe is *Paho*, or *Pwo*. Thetong, or Tethong, seems to have been their ancient metropolis. They resemble Karens in migratory habits, dress, habitations, and customs, but hold themselves to be of a higher grade. They are given to trade, and travel extensively among the villages in the wilderness, selling ornaments and other articles of luxury. The upper portions of the tribe cultivate tea, cotton, and indigo. They raise also considerable *flos* silk, feeding the worm on the plant called *Puja*.

8. The TSWAHS reside north-east of Maulmain, and are considerably numerous. They are somewhat more civilised than Karens, and manufacture many articles requiring considerable skill.

9. The KAHS inhabit the Siamese frontier, and are addicted to wandering, like the Karens. They were formerly numerous in Tavoy province, but the bulk of them went over to Siam when the English took the country. They are still numerous. Their language is unwritten. Partial vocabularies of the languages of the Karens, Lowas, and Kahs, are given in the Asiatic Researches, on the authority of Dr. Buchanan Hamilton. It is not improbable that this is the tribe called *Lowas*, or possibly the people called *Lowu-kah*, found between Thenmee and the Camboja river.

10. The WAHS are another wandering tribe, partly in the province of Mergui, but chiefly in Siam. They amount to about 12,000

11. The SE-LONGS, or *Zaloungs*, inhabit islands of the Mergui archipelago, chiefly Dong, Sulæ, and Lampee. On each island is a distinct tribe, with a distinct dialect; but the language is essentially the same, and resembles the Malay more than any other. Few races of men are more degraded than these. Their numbers cannot be ascertained, as they fly into the mountains when strangers visit their shores. Their food is chiefly fish and shell-fish. In seeking this, they put up their wretched huts wherever they find a temporary supply, and spend much of their time in canoes, among the small uninhabited islands contiguous. A missionary or two for these tribes might reside at Mergui, and itinerate among them in the dry season. Their unsettled residences would preclude his having access to them at any one place, till converts were made and some village established.

12. The KAREN-NES, or *Red Karens*, occupy the region directly east of Maulmain. They are more fair than Burmans, and their eyes generally light coloured; which is very rare in the east. They are not a tribe of Karens, as the name implies, but seem to be descended from the Shyans. The latter universally wear trousers of *blue* cotton; these wear the same garment, but always of a red colour; hence the name, probably given by some one who supposed them to be Karens. Their language contains a large mixture of Peguan words. They are remarkable for living in houses connected together, like a long shed. Sometimes 100 live under one roof. They are without large cities, but have several villages of considerable size,

and practise various mechanical arts with respectable success.

They are represented to be zealous Boodhists, and exceedingly savage. This character, however, is probably given them principally from their being addicted to man-stealing. Their practice is to seize defenceless Siamese, and sell them to the Siamese. This trade is not now so earnestly pursued as formerly.

13. The LAWAS are in the extreme south-east, bordering on China and Siam. Whether they have a separate country, is uncertain. There are several large tribes of these; some tributary to Burmah, and some to Siam. Their entire number probably exceeds that of the Karens. It is probable they live among the Shyans as the Karens do among the Burmans; but their laws, religion, and customs, are wholly different. They are not Boodhists but worship *Nats*, and offer bloody sacrifices. They not only use no idols, but reject them with great abhorrence, and break them. They seem to have no large cities. Their language seems to be corrupt Burman. They are obviously distinguished from the Shayns, as an inferior and less civilised race.

14. The EC-CA-BAT KU-LAHS are occasionally called *Myadoes*, from Myadoo, their chief city. They are found a little north of Moke-so-bo, or Mon-cha-boo, as Symes calls it. Some of them reside in the British territory, and, are called *Cachars*. They are a very short race nearly as black as Hindoos. Among them are a number of Peguan-Portuguese Christians, brought there and colonised in a former reign, most of whom are distinguished by the light colour of their

eyes. The tribe is famous for silk manufactures. The dialect is peculiar, though essentially Burman. Burman books would answer for them, but few or none can read.

15. The QUE, or *Quays*.—Some of this people reside twelve or eighteen miles east of Ummerrapoora, and two clans on the west side of the Irawaddy, towards the Kyenduem. They have been a warlike, intelligent people, and very conspicuous in Burman history, though now but a few thousands. Their language is essentially Burman, but mixed with Peguan and Siamese. The Scriptures, as already printed, might probably suffice, though it would be necessary that a missionary should acquire their colloquial dialect. The chief Woongee at Ava assured me that they have books in their own language, written, as he thought, in a character resembling Chinese.

16. The BOGGS are a considerable race north of Ava. Their language and customs are peculiar; but neither their boundaries nor numbers are ascertained. Nor could I ascertain whether these are the remnants of the ancient kingdom of Bong, or whether they are the same with a tribe called Phwoon. It is indeed doubtful whether the kingdom of Bong, described by Pemberton and others, ever existed as an independent nation.

17. The D'HAN-OOS are found from 100 to 500 miles east of Ava. They have villages, but no distinct territory. Though not numerous, they are a thrifty, industrious people, and raise much of the tea which is brought to Ava. Their language is said to resemble the Tavoy dialect.

18. The **KA-DOOS** are scattered over the province of Mogoung, between the Irawaddy and Kyenduem rivers; chiefly between 24° and 26° of north latitude. They have their own villages and chiefs, and a distinct though unwritten language, but no separate territory. They are a quiet, industrious race. Their chief town is Penjala-Namo.

19. The **YAWS** are on the lower waters of the Kyenduem, not far from Ava. The district is sometimes called *Yo*, or *Jo*. The language is essentially Burman, but spoken with a dialect intelligible only to themselves. Unlike the Burmans, they suffer their teeth to remain white, and the hair to flow loose. Most of the people are entirely without religion, like the Karens; the rest are Boodhists. They are an agricultural and pastoral people, enjoying a country of extreme salubrity and fruitfulness. They manufacture sugar, and export it to other parts of the empire, and often resort to Ava for the purposes of trade.

20. **EN-GYEE**.—This tribe occupies the mountains towards Munnipore, have a language of their own, unwritten, and are somewhat numerous.

21. The **KYENS** are sometimes called *Boo-as*, sometimes *Na-gas*, and by the Burmans *Chins*. They occupy part of the Arracan and Munnipore frontier, chiefly the mountains of the district of Kubo, and amount to about 50,000, divided into various tribes, as the *Changsel*, the *Kongju*, the *Chedoo*, the *Kuporee*, &c. Some of the tribes are tributary to Burman, others to the East India Company, and some are completely indepen-

dent. Some tribes wear no other clothing than a thin board, fastened in front by a string round the loins. One tribe tattoo their women's faces in a horrible manner, of whom I have seen a number. They generally call themselves *Koloun*. Hamilton regards them as one of the original tribes of Farther India, and that, under various names, such as Karens, Kookies, Cossyahs, &c., and in various stages of civilisation, they are spread, more or less, over this whole peninsula. Within the limits of Arracan are about 15,000, who might be reached through Akyab and Kyouk Phyou. A considerable village of these people stands at the entrance of the Oo-tha-long Nullah, ten days by water from Akyab. Many of them live in the intermediate space. The hill tribes are fierce, and dreaded by all their neighbours, but the lowlanders cultivate the earth peacefully, and have settled habitations. Those under Burman authority pay their tribute chiefly in ivory, wax, coarse cottons, ginger, and turmeric. They are greatly addicted to arrack extracted from rice. I have seen cloths and other articles made by them, which display excellent skill and taste. Their language is peculiar and unwritten, and the dialects of different tribes vary considerably.

Of religion they know almost nothing, having scarcely any idea of a Supreme Being, and few superstitions of any kind. Some offer bloody sacrifices before a certain bush, and worship meteoric stones, talismans, and a god whom they call *A-po-ra-the*. The dead are burned, the bones, &c., of poor persons remaining around the pyre being buried on the spot, while those of the rich are carried to the great Kyoung-na-tine mountain,

in the Arracan range. The father is expected to marry the widow of his son, and the son may marry any of his father's widows, except his own mother. Adultery is always punished with death.

22. The PA-LOUNGS, or *Polongs*, a numerous and intelligent race, reside between Bamoo and the Chinese frontier, having separate towns and villages among the Shyans, but with little if any territory exclusively their own. Some of their villages are interspersed among the Kah-kyens, and some are found almost as far south as Ava. They are a highland race, and find security in their mountains, both from Burmah and China, paying no tribute to either. They cultivate tea exclusively, and export it, both dry and pickled. The men dress in Chinese fashion: women wear trousers, and a gown reaching to the knees, with sleeves. Their own language is unwritten, but many of the males can read Shyan. The language itself seems to be Shyan largely intermingled with Chinese, and pronounced so like Chinese that the true Shyans do not understand it.

23. The KAH-KYENS, a very large and numerous tribe, of Singpho origin, extend from the Irawaddy to China, and from Bamoo to Thibet. It is not certain whether they have a distinct territory. Many of them reside in the province of Bamoo, particularly in and around Mogoung, and are distinguished by tattooing the space between their eyes. The Singphos are sometime called *Kahkyens*, but always resent it. These and the Lawas seem to be included by Du Halde in his map, under the term Lo-los. Their language resembles the Burman, but as a people

they are remarkably different from Chinese or Burmans. They are much less civilised than the tribes around them.

24. The SING-PHOS or *Sinkphos*, called by Burmans *Thembaws*, occupy both sides of the higher region of the Irawaddy, and spread from the Pat-koi hills to China. Duffer Gam, their principal chief, assured me, that they amount to at least 300,000 souls. They are divided into fifteen or twenty tribes, the principal of which are the *Mecrip*, *Bsesa*, *Iutong*, and *Tesam*. Some tribes are under English authority, but more under Burman, and several are independent. The Burman governor resides at Too-wah; but they have no large city. They trade with the Shyans, at Mogoung, and the Burmans down the Kyenduem, but chiefly with China. Their exports are gems, amber, small dahs, and salt. They worship Nats, and cherish a great hatred to Boodhism; but considerable numbers are annually proselytised by Brahmins from Bengal, who constantly make strong efforts for this purpose; and unless Christians act with vigour and promptitude, annually increasing numbers will go over to that dreadful system. Some of these tribes are among the finest races of men in all this part of the world. The language is unwritten.

25. The PHWOONS or *Phwons*, occupy parts of the region round the Mogoung. There are two tribes of this name, distinguished by the terms great and small; whose dialects differ from each other considerably, and from adjacent languages totally. They are a quiet, industrious, agricultural people. They build their houses not like



the Burmans and Shyans, but like the people of the Kubo valley. They say their original country was to the north-east.

26. KHAM-TEES, spelled variously *Khantees*, *Khantis*, *Kamptiss*, and *Kantees*, are found on the west bank of the Irawaddy, and are a numerous race. A small part of them only is subject to Burmah. Their language bears considerable affinity to the Burman, and is called *Tai*.

Adjacent to Burmah, but not tributary to it, are—

1. The MUN-NI-POREANS.—Their country has been so variously designated as to make great confusion in maps. By the Burmans their region is called *Kathag*; by the Assamese *Mekley*; by the Cachereese, *Moglie*! and by the Shyans, *Cassay*. Some authors give them one of these names and some another, and some give them as separate countries. They hold a territory of about 7,000 square miles; but the population, though known to be numerous, is not ascertained. It is at least 70,000. The great valley of Munnipore is 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, and eminently salubrious.

2. The KA-CHARS, or *Cachars*, are bounded north by Assam, east by Munnipore, south by Tippera or Tripura, and west by Sylhet, and Jyn-teah. Their language is peculiar. They came under the British government in 1832, and are rapidly improving in their civil condition. Surrounded on three sides by high mountain ranges, the rains during the south-west monsoons are very violent; and the inhabitants are subject to ague, diarrhœa, dysentery, and fevers. The population is rated by some authors at 500,000,

and by others different numbers, down to 8,000. The principal place is Silchar, on the south side of the Barak river.

3. JYN-TEAH, or *Gentea*, lies between Cachar on the east, Assam on the north, and the Soor-mah river on the south, containing a population of 150,000, of whom the greater part are Mussulmans, and low caste Hindus of Bengal origin. Most of this territory is now annexed to the British dominions.

4. COL-SY-AS, or *Khasias*, who denominate themselves Khyees, occupy the mountains of Assam, Cachar, Sylhet, and the Garrows. The region is about seventy miles long, and fifty miles wide, containing 3,500 square miles. They are a numerous race, divided into clans, such as the *Kyria*, the *Churra*, the *Ramryee*, the *Nusyung*, the *Muriow*, &c., and are distributed in considerable numbers among each of the tribes named above. The language in all is essentially the same. They retain some of the forms of independence, but are under the supervision of a British "agent for Cossya affairs." Some attempts have been made by the Serampore missionaries to give them a written language in the Bengalee character, but nothing of consequence has yet been done. Their religion is impure Brahminism, which has not long been introduced.

5. GAR-ROWS, or *Garos*, occupy the mountainous region of the same name, bounded north and west by the valley of the Burampooter, south by Sylhet, and east by Jynteah. They were formerly numerous, but have been reduced by their warlike habits. The skulls of enemies are highly valued, and kept as trophies. Their

territory is about 130 miles long, by thirty or forty broad. They raise large quantities of cotton, and carry on a considerable trade with the English who now inhabit the country. Their houses are very comfortable, built on piles like the Burmans. Women do much servile work, but have a voice in all public business, and possess their full share of influence. The language is stated to be simple and easy of acquisition, but is not reduced to writing. They have a religion of their own, but no priesthood. They worship *Sall Jung*, believe in transmigration, and make offerings, but have no temples. Brahminical doctrines are daily spreading amongst them, especially the more southern tribes. Polygamy is not practised. Their temper is said to be mild and gay, but they are much addicted to drunkenness. A mission to this people is earnestly called for by Captain Jenkins, and some others of our friends residing adjacent to them. If a brother were to engage in their behalf, he might reside for a year or two at Gowhatee, where every facility would be at hand in gaining the language. This field, however, is much less encouraging in its present aspect than many others mentioned in this paper.

6. The TIP-PE-RAS, or *Tapuras*. Their country is called by Bengalese *Tura*, or *Teura*, lying on the east bank of the Burampooter, between 24° and 27° north latitude. On the north, it has Sylhet; on the south, Chittagong. It comprehends 7,000 square miles, and now forms part of Bengal. In this country are made the well-known cotton goods called *Baftas*, exported to every part of the world. They are a comparatively

civilised people, amounting to 800,000 souls, a majority of them profess Hinduism; the rest are Mussulmans. They build their houses like the Burmans. Some parts of the country are covered with jungle, and abound with elephants, but the rest is fertile, and well cultivated, and the people are not only attentive to agriculture, but to manufactures of various kinds, and to commerce. They are divided into three tribes, viz. *Tipperahs*, properly so called, on the banks of the Gomuty; *Alinagar*, on the river Phani, or Fenny; and the *Reangon*, on the river Monu. All speak the same language, which is peculiar to themselves.

7. The LA-LONGS inhabit the low hills of the Jynteah country, especially a tract now annexed to the district of Nowgong, and are estimated at above 20,000 souls.

They resemble the Mekeers in character, have no written language, scarcely any idea of a Supreme Being, and hardly the forms of any religion. Their region is very unhealthy to foreigners six months in a year, but the missionary could then reside at the adjacent and very healthy city of Nowgong, where much of his work for them could be continued.

8. The NAG-AS are a very numerous people on the borders of Cachar, Munnipore, and Assam. Their country belongs partly to one, and partly to the other of these states. They are called Nagas (literally "naked people") from their almost total want of dress. There are many clans or tribes of them, differing greatly in their measure of civilisation. The better sort dwell in compact villages of well-built houses on high hills, and are

reported to be a very handsome and athletic race, active both in agriculture and merchandise. The religion of the more intelligent tribes is a rude sort of demonology, but they have no idea of a Supreme Being, or the nature of the soul. Some of these tribes are in the lowest state of humanity. The Reverend Mr. Rae, of the Serampore mission, has made extensive journeys among this people, and the Meekeers, and published ample and interesting details.

9. The Joo-ME-AS reside chiefly in Chittagong, on a range of hilly country, on the head waters of the Kulladine, between the mountains and the plains. There are some tribe in Tippera, and some in Arracan. They cultivate hill rice and cotton. Their language is wholly unintelligible both to Mughls and Bengalese, and is unwritten. Their religion is an impure Boodhism. They remove their villages every year, and always cultivate new grounds. They pay tribute to the government at Chittagong, through a native Zemindar, who lives in considerable state at Bazileah, eastward of Chittagong, and calls himself raja.

10. The ЧНАК-МА tribe is allied to the Joomea, and practise the same religion. They are wholly confined in the hilly interior of Chittagong, and are supposed to amount to about 17,000. They are considerably civilised, and can read Bengalee, but generally write it in Burman character. A dialect of the Bengalee is the common language, and their dress is quite that of Hindus. These and the Joomeas are a hardy and industrious people, and cut all the ship and furniture timber which is brought down Chittagong river. They

are remarked also for intrepidity as hunters, and for general gentleness and probity of manners.

11. The **RAJ-BUNG-SIES** amount to full 30,000 souls, scattered in every direction over Chittagong, and occupying some places almost exclusively, such as Run-ga-heer and Sunka river. They are mostly Bengalee Boodhists, sprung from governing families of Arracanese, who being forced to abandon their country during former intestinal commotions, settled in Chittagong, and became naturalised. Their names signifies literally "children of princes." But though they hold themselves superior to Mughls, they are a very poor people, and many of them come down into the large towns to be servants. Their language is a corrupt Bengalee. They retain the Boodhist faith, and have a few priests and kyounghs, but no pagodas.

12. The **A-RINGS** are a tribe wholly independent. They occupy spurs of the Youmadon mountains in the rear of the Kyens, and are known to amount to at least 30,000. They reside within the limits of Arracan, but are not enumerated in the census of that province. They bring into the plains cotton, ivory, and a little cloth, to barter for salt and grapes. They are exceedingly addicted to intoxication. The liquor for this purpose is made of fermented rice, distilled with a rude apparatus of earthenware. Their language is peculiar and unwritten. They are not Boodhists, but worship Nats; paying, however, little attention to religious forms, and only when pressed by calamity.

13. The **Koo-KIES**, or *Kunghis*, called by the Burmans *Langeh*, and by the Bengalese *Lingta*,

re a very numerous people, having at least 0,000 men capable of bearing arms. They occupy the region of the Barak and Koomptyers, bordered, though indistinctly, by Kachar and Tipperah on the west, Chittagong on the south-west, and Burmah on the south-east. They are divided into at least ten tribes, bearing different names, but generally live at peace with each other. The dialects of these tribes are said to be so various as to be unintelligible to each other. They have no caste, and eat all kinds of flesh. Some of the tribes go nearly naked. In general they neglect agriculture, and depend on the game and fruits of the forest. By consequence, they all collect into villages, some of which are very large, and which they remove every few years. They believe in future rewards and punishments, and worship evil genii, whom they desire to propitiate. Some are found also in Chittagong. They are exceedingly savage and warlike; strangers cannot pass safely through their country, their heads being considered a great prize. No young man can marry without possessing one of these trophies. Some houses have many of them.

14. The KUM-A-ONS, or *Kumoons*, occupy an area of about seven thousand square miles formerly subject to the Goorkas, extending from Rohilkund to the peaks of the Himmalaya—a rugged and cold district, with little level arable land. The people are in a very rude state, labouring just enough to support nature. Some of them live in stone houses. The religion is Hinduism, and many of the people are Brahmins. This country was acquired by the British in 1815,

and Almora, one of its towns, was made a sanitarium for the Company's servants in bad health. A good road extends from Rohileund to Almora, through the Bamoury pass; and another from Hawulbaugh, a civil station of the East India Company. This country is largely described by Fullarton, Raper, and Dr. F. Buchanan.

15. The **MROONGS**, or *Mroos*, occupy the country between the Kyens and the plains, from the Cosi to the Teesta, north of Rungpore district, and formerly belonging to Nepaul. From this region great quantities of timber are floated to Calcutta, chiefly the saul tree. A number of this tribe, supposed to amount to five thousand, are found in Arracan, chiefly in the district of Akyab, and are as civilised as the people of the plains.

16. **KUBOS** are of Shyan descent, and occupy the valley of the Munnipore river, one of the tributaries of the Kyenduem.

17. The **GOOR-KAS** occupy a large region north of Nepaul, but a warmer and pleasanter country. It has many fine mountain streams, most of which combine in the Trisoolgunga. Goorkha, the former capital (lat.  $27^{\circ} 50'$ , long.  $84^{\circ} 22'$ ), forty-one miles west-north-west from Catmandoo, the present capital, twice that number. They conquered Nepaul in 1768, and became a powerful people, but are now under British rule.

18. The **KIR-AUTS** evidently of Tartar origin, occupy a space between Nepaul and Bootan. They are now confined to the mountains, but formerly governed portions of Dinagepore and Rungpore. Their religion is a negligent Boodhism; but since their subjection to the Goorkas,



many have become Brahminists. They are not wholly illiterate, and write the language in the Nagree character. Individuals of this tribe are scattered over Bengal and Behar, where they follow the life of gipsies, and wander about, preaching and telling fortunes. These are called *Kichucks*.

19. The **BIJ-NEES** occupy a province east of Assam, and speak the Bengalee language. They occupy both sides of the Burampooter, part of them being subject to the British and part independent. It is an extensive, and much of it a beautiful country. The natives depend chiefly on agriculture, and have therefore stationary villages, many of which are much neater than those of Bengal. Some idea both of the agriculture and population of the district may be derived from the fact that, in 1809, taxes were collected by the raja from 32,400 ploughs. Bijnee, the capital, is situated twenty-five miles east from Goalpara (lat.  $26^{\circ} 29'$ , long.  $89^{\circ} 47'$ ), and is strongly fortified.

20. The **AS-SAM-ESE** occupy most of the valleys and fertile portions of the region called *Assam*, while other tribes, in general less civilised, occupy the hills and mountains, especially on the frontier. Their territory became a part of Burmah in 1821-2, but is now wholly under British control. They are very numerous, estimated by some authors at a million, and are so far civilised as to secure to a missionary the immediate prospect of usefulness.

A missionary to this people might very advantageously be at once settled at Jorehaut, long the seat of the Assamese rajas, and regarded as the capital of Upper Assam. Another is wanted at

Gowhatty, the capital of Lower Assam and the residence of the British agent for this region—a station now held by Captain Jenkins, a warm philanthropist, who has not only invited missionaries to this region, and rendered them important services, but has given more than a thousand dollars toward the operations of the American Baptist Mission of Sudiya. Nowgong, Goalpara, &c., are now ripe for missionary labour.

21. The MEE-KEERS, or *Mikirs*, occupy a part of Assam south of the Burampooter, and amount to at least twenty thousand. They are greatly addicted to drunkenness, but are simple, honest, industrious, and inoffensive. Some of late years have become Brahminists. They are a people in every respect prepared for missionary labour. The most inviting point for a station is Nowgong. The Serampore missionaries were very anxious to establish a mission here, but relinquished the idea for want of means.

22. The A-BORS reside along the south side of the Himalaya Mountains, from long. 93° to long. 95°. A very numerous and somewhat civilised race, divided into various tribes, such as the *Padows*, *Saloos*, *Meboos*, *Golmare*, *Mayings*, &c. Their country is cold and manners rude. They use, both in war and in chase, arrows poisoned with bisa. The article is prepared from a fibrous root which they keep secret, and is sold in considerable quantities to neighbouring tribes. They regard no food impure but beef, and are addicted to strong drink. They worship a deity called *Ap-hoom*. They dress well. Some of them annually visit Sudiya. No written character.

23. The MEE-REES, or *Miris*, adjoin the Abors, and are wholly independent. They occupy a strip of level land extending along the right bank of the Burampooter from Assam to the Dihong river, which separates them from the Abors. They are few and degraded, but somewhat industrious. They raise some opium, and have a few manufactures. The head village is *Motgaon*. Their language is the same as that of the Abors. The missionaries for this tribe and the Duphlas would probably reside at Bishmath (lat.  $26^{\circ} 40'$ , long.  $93^{\circ} 12'$ ), a British station on the Burampooter, and head-quarters of the Assam light infantry; or at Tezpore, on the north bank of the same river (lat.  $26^{\circ} 37'$ , long.  $92^{\circ} 52'$ ), where also are British officers and sepoy. The country between these stations is beautiful. On the west side of the Barelli river, which passes through this space, is a settlement of at least 400 families of Meerees; and on the east is the densely peopled district of Noa-dwar.

24. The BOR-ABORS, a powerful tribe occupying the loftier ranges between Sudiya and the Bonash river, extending the Thibet. The word *Bor* means *great*. The people call themselves *Padam*. These and the two last-named tribes are essentially one people, and speak the same language. They have no written characters, but, the language is fluent, easy of pronunciation, and readily acquired by a foreigner. Missionaries might at first reside with the Meerees, and penetrate among the Abors and Borabors, as prudence might dictate.

25. The A-noms occupy the eastern parts of Assam, and speak the language of Bengal.

Three-fourths of them are Brahminists. They are more numerous than some of the tribes which have been named above.

26. The KOL-I-TAS, or *Kulitas*, are scattered through the Rungpore district, and part of Assam. They speak Bengalee, and have adopted that religion. They are called by Hamilton a powerful, independent, and civilised nation.

27. The MISH-MEES occupy the sources of the Lohit and Dibong rivers, to the north-east of Sudiya—a lofty and very cold region. They are a very extensive race, possessing industrious habits, and more gentleness than mountaineers in general. Missionaries would be quite safe among them. None are found on the plains near Sudiya, but a constant succession of them visit that city for purposes of trade.

They are distinguished for hospitality. When a man kills a bullock, he invites his friends to partake; all the skulls are preserved in his house, as a proof of his hospitality, till he dies, when they are piled on his grave as an honourable monument. One branch of the Mish-meets are a good deal mixed among the Abors.

28. The KAM-TEES, descended from the Bor Kamtees, inhabit a triangle near the sources of the Irawaddy, bounded by the rivers Lohit and Dibong, and the mountains of the Mishmeets. They are a very intelligent and numerous race, and have many large towns, among which Mun-lōng and Mun-sai are the principal. The language is Shyan. The Rev. Messrs Brown and Cutter are now labouring at Sudiya for this tribe and others, and thus form the exception mentioned at the beginning of this article. Sudiya

stands on the right bank of the Ku-nil, or Kundil nullah, six miles above its junction with the Lohit, and has 10,000 inhabitants. It is the advance British post on the north-east frontier, and has a military force and commissioner. The missionaries have reduced the language to writing, in the Roman character, and printed various elementary books.

29. The BOR-KAMTEES reside between the eastern portion of Assam and the valley of the Irawaddy. Their capital is Manchee, twelve days from Sudiya. A numerous and interesting people. Language is nearly allied to the Shyan.

30. The SING-PHOS. Of this people there are large numbers under British sway in the neighbourhood of Sudiya. They are divided from the Burman Singphos on the south by the Patkoi hills, and from the Bor Kamtees on the east by the Langtan mountains. On the west they are bounded by a line extending from Sudiya to the Patkoi range. They worship idols, and seem to have a religion mixed up of doctrines from their neighbours. An intelligent and enterprising race. No written character. The Singphos are likely to be much better known from the fact that the tea plant, which the British are so anxious to cultivate in India, flourishes chiefly in their territory. A very inviting missionary station is founded at Ningru, a beautiful village on the high bank of the Buri Dihing, three days south of Sudiya, and in the midst of a tea country. Missionaries might, however, advantageously remain a year or two at Sudiya, where are many Singphos, and where advantages for acquiring the language would be

greater than in the jungle. The language is said to be singularly difficult, and full of combinations of consonants, almost unmanageable to a foreigner.

31. The KU-NUNGS a wretched race, subject to the Kamtees, somewhat numerous. Language not written. They occupy the mountains to the northward and eastward of the Hukung valley, towards Assam.

32. The MUT-TUCKS, a tribe on the eastern border of Assam, south of the Burampooter, numbering 25,000 men, besides women and children. Some of their villages contain 1,000 houses each. It is probable they are the same people sometimes called also *Moo-a-ma-ree-as*, *Marams* or *Morahs*. Though occupying a region rendered cold by its elevation, they have many comforts, and are a highly thrifty and intelligent people.

33. The LAP-CHAS, or *Sikkims*, are separated from the Chinese dominions in Thibet by the Kha-wa Karpola ridge of the Himmalaya. The eastern branch of the Teesta river separates them from the Deb Raja of Bootan ; and to the west, the Konki river divides them from Napaul. The length of the district is about seventy miles, and the average breadth forty, almost all hilly. The proper name of this people is *Lapcha* ; the term Sikkims being given them from the name of the capital. They are one of the most important tribes of the Nepaul valley. They generally embrace the Boodhism of the Grand Lama, but they are very lax in their observance of it, killing animals and drinking to excess. They are intermixed very much with the Booteas. The

unicorn, so long deemed fabulous, is said certainly to exist in this country. The region is under British influence, though virtually independent. The raja holds an intimate intercourse with Lassa and China.

34. The DUF-LAS, sometimes spelled *Duphlas*, and sometimes *Dupholas*; an independent tribe on the north border of Assam, westward of Bootan. They are a powerful tribe, and inhabit a region which though hilly, is fruitful both in produce and game. They are considerably civilised, and carry on a brisk traffic with their neighbours.

35. The A-KAS border on the Dufilas, and are also independent.

36. The CUPA CHOWAS occupy a hilly range contiguous to the Akas.

37. The BOOTEAS, an independent tribe, in the neighbourhood of the Akas and Dufilas, occupying both sides of the great Himmalaya range. Those on this side are tributary to the English, and those on the other side to some tribes of Tartars. They are evidently of Thibet origin, and the province was probably once part of that country. Much of the territory is above the line of perpetual snow. The villagers migrate to the valleys in October, and return in May. Their principal subsistence is derived from numerous flocks and herds. The villages are small and scattered. The religion is Lamaism.

Besides these there are several tribes less known such as the Tangkools, the Kons, the Anals, the Poorums, Mueyols, Munsangs, Murings, and Luhoppas, all found on the mountain ranges to the eastward of Chittagong; the Rumbos, Jo-

holes, Jompoles, Gominchis, Oojongs, Scrimantis, Ulus, Calangs, Jellaboos, Segamet, Ke-moungs, Udias, Sakkeys, Utans, Joccoons, Semangs, Oodees, Sakais, and Rayots, all on the Malay peninsula, having different languages, though more or less mixed with Malay; the Simongs, on the Yamunee river, the Reegas, Pasees, Mixongs, Bibors, and Barkans, all on the northern edge of Assam, towards the Lama country; the Uniyas, Marchas, Jowaries, and Suryabans, on the margin of the Himmalaya, in the region of Niti Ghaut, and Suttleje river; the Rhoibus, Dongphus, Champungs, Kapwis, and Korengs, all occupying portions of the region of Assam.

Here then are twenty-six races of people in the Burman empire, and eighty in the immediate vicinity, making *a hundred and six*. The subdivision of many of these into tribes speaking different dialects, increases the number of distinct missions which demand to be commenced, to about 120. Further investigation in these regions will discover other tribes, equally entitled to missionary effort. If the survey were extended, so as to include the territories of the Grand Lama, where it is believed there is no missionary, we should enrol some sixteen or twenty tribes and dialects more.

Supposing the Baptist Board to be bound to supply only the field described in this paper, and which has hitherto been left to them, together with British and Proper Burmah, and to send only two missionaries to each language, what a mighty effort is required, compared to their present operations! Two hundred and forty men



would be demanded immediately; and years must elapse before they could acquire their respective languages.

Should we at once enter these fields, and forestall the introduction of Hindu and Burman literature and superstition, we should gain much every way. As regards literature alone, promptitude is important. To *commence* this, among a rude but rising people, is to save mountains of obstacles in future efforts. Heathen literature is everywhere, and has always been, the *grand prop* of heathen religions. It was the curse of Chaldea, of Egypt, of Greece, of Rome, of Arabia. It is the curse of India, of Burmah, of China. The absence of it is the huge advantage of the Karens, and one great cause, under God, of missionary success with that people. The same advantage is now offered in relation to the tribes here described, but it cannot always continue. They will soon have Mahometan or Hindu legends and literature, if we give them not the truth.

These remarks are not at variance with the admitted fact that ignorance is a principal hindrance of Christianity. The educated heathen is as ignorant as the uneducated; nay, his requisitions make him worse than ignorant. They fill him with error; they oppress him with stronger superstitions; they inflate him with pride, while they debase and harden his heart.

To give any people a written language, is not to divert the missionary from this proper work. It is a part of his work, and highly important. In accomplishing it, he gives more or less literature to the people: and this literature, being

at the foundation of all their future improvements, and based not on false but on true philosophy, must even prove the handmaid to religion, to say nothing of still higher benefits gained by giving a people the written word of God. Two hundred and fifty or sixty men are wanted this moment to supply these new fields, and to reinforce the present missions in Burmah, even to the supposition that native preachers will be raised up in numbers equal to nearly all the demand for preaching.

Further remarks are unnecessary. The facts speak with sufficient eloquence. Where are the thousand young men in our churches? Will they all go to the law, to physic, to merchandise, to mechanics, or to the field, without once questioning the propriety of giving themselves to the holy ministry? Shall the heathen, the Jew, the Mussulman, and the Oapist, have none of their sympathies? Must every view of a perishing world be shut from their eyes, while in their own land, and for their own ends, they seek domestic comforts, or amass property, or squabble in politics?

May those whose duty it is to embark in this blessed enterprise hear the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and without delay respond, "Here am I, send me!"

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A  
NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
LATE MILITARY AND POLITICAL OPERATIONS  
IN  
THE BURMESE EMPIRE,  
WITH  
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT CONDITION OF  
THE COUNTRY, ITS MANNERS, CUSTOMS,  
AND INHABITANTS.  
BY  
HENRY G. BELL, Esq.

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PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHER BY P. E. D'ROZARIO AND CO.

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1852.



A N A R R A T I V E  
OF THE LATE  
MILITARY AND POLITICAL OPERATIONS  
IN THE  
B U R M E S E E M P I R E.

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On the return of Colonel Symes from the court of Ava in the year 1796, it appeared not improbable that the feelings of mutual conciliation and friendship, which he had succeeded in establishing between the two countries, might have continued unimpaired for several years to come. It seems, however, a matter of very great difficulty to calculate upon any continuance of pacific dispositions on the part of the golden-footed monarch of Burmah. His policy seems rather to be that of restless ambition and perpetual action; and if, at any time, he is quiet, it is the quiet of exhaustion and consequent necessity—not of inclination. Nor is it to be denied, that, with the aid of his ministers of state, and the other machinery of his despotic government, he possesses a talent for negotiation, and person-

al as well as national aggrandizement, which might reflect credit upon the Machiavels of perhaps more civilized, but not less artful cabinets. It cannot, therefore, be cause of much wonder, that, not long after the termination of Colonel Symes' embassy, new causes of distrust and contention arose.

It appears, that though the Burmese, by force of arms, had subdued Arracan, yet, that they had never been able to reconcile its inhabitants to their yoke. Nor, indeed, is it likely that they ever attempted it; for, with the Burmese, the conquered are always slaves. Accordingly, the governors they sent into this province, proceeded to such tyrannical extremities in the burdens they imposed upon the inhabitants, that, rather than submit to their grinding rapaciousness, the Arracanese left their country in crowds, and, without either asking or receiving permission, established themselves in the British territory of Chittagong. They who thus emigrated acquired the appellation of Mughhs. It was easy to foresee that a system of desertion, proceeding on so extensive a scale, and rendered so easy of execution by the facility of intercourse between Chittagong and Arracan, which are separated only by the river Naaf, could not be very agreeable either to the pride or selfishness of the Burmese monarch. Nor was the English government blind to the mischievous consequences which might result from its being supposed to harbour the fugitives of a neighbouring state. Its exertions, however, to prevent the continuance of the evil, were of little avail; and by the year 1799, it is calculated that nearly two-thirds of the entire population

of Arracan were established on large tracts of land in Chittagong, which had hitherto lain waste and useless. The jealousy and anger of the Burmese was now effectually roused. They looked upon the refugees as their slaves, by whose flight they had been deprived of actual property. An army, therefore, of four thousand men was speedily organized, and, without much ceremony, ordered to march in pursuit of the runaways into Chittagong. Here, for some months, an irregular system of warfare was carried on against the new settlers; but perceiving that its results were ineffective, a letter, couched in those haughty terms which the Burmese are so fond of arrogating, was addressed to the head magistrate of Chittagong. It demanded, in the name of the Burman Sovereign, that the fugitives should be given up by the British; and in case of refusal, an invasion was threatened of a more extensive and formidable kind. To this despatch it was of course answered, that as long as the Burmese army remained within the British territory, no negotiation could be entered into. The invaders, however, at first refused to withdraw; but after having, with a good deal of courage, withstood the attack of a British force, which was marched to meet them, they, of their own accord, repassed the frontier.

Notwithstanding the determined feeling with which the Burmese seem to have been actuated, it does not appear that our government in India felt itself called upon to take any steps towards conciliating them. On the contrary, it was resolved to give the Mughs a permanent and healthy settlement on the borders of Arracan,

between the Ramoo river and the Naaf. This was probably done as a matter of sound policy, and in the expectation that the settlement would form a useful barrier between our possessions and those of their enemies, the Burmese. The results, however, did not answer the expectations.

The Mughs, soured by disappointment, and still languishing to regain the country of their forefathers, which they felt had been unjustly taken from them, instead of being content with the usual occupations of peaceful colonists, formed themselves into tribes of predatory marauders, making continual incursions into Arracan, and nourishing, with inveterate and hereditary ardour, their hatred of the Burmese. For several years, these struggles and desultory contests being carried on at a distance from the seat of government, either of Ava or British India, seem not to have excited much attention. It is proper however to remark, that the Burmese having been foiled in their attempt to induce the Company to refuse an asylum to the expatriated Mughs, always affected to hold it responsible for the injuries they sustained from their hostile incursions.

Passing over an interval of some years, in which affairs went on in this manner, without any important results ensuing on either side, we find that, in 1811, some transactions took place which, as they paved the way for others of still more serious consequence, are worth recording. Among those who had been driven out of Arracan, and had taken refuge in Chittagong, was a man of some note, and not destitute of abilities, named King Berring. Having been deprived



of considerable possessions in his own country, he naturally felt the hardship of his situation the more. Retaining, however, much of the influence he formerly possessed over the Arracanese, he induced not only a large body of Mughls, but also many of those who had not as yet left their country, but who secretly hated the Burmese, to join him in a general and well concerted invasion of the whole province of Arracan. He was so successful, that in a short time the capital alone was able to offer him any resistance. As the standard of what the Burmese considered rebellion, had been openly erected in Chittagong, and as King Berring had been residing for some time under British protection, it was naturally enough concluded by the Court of Ava, that his present proceedings were countenanced by our Government. This, however, was by no means the case; and in order to remove any such impression, Captain Canning was ordered to proceed to Rangoon, and from thence if he saw occasion, to Ummerapoora, in order to satisfy the Burmese court that the insurgent chief and his followers had acted, if not in express opposition to the commands of the Bengal government, at least without its concurrence. This mission did not end altogether so favourably as could have been wished. The Burmese authorities at Rangoon, far from treating the British envoy with that respect to which the official situation he held entitled him, seem to have thought that they were more likely to ingratiate themselves with their sovereign, by casting upon him every possible slight short of direct insult. Under these

circumstances, Captain Canning did not think it prudent to venture further into the interior, being well informed that it was the object of the government to keep him, if possible, as a hostage, until the Company should have consented to give up the insurgent Mughls. These treacherous designs he contrived to frustrate, not without considerable difficulty; and in 1812 he returned to Calcutta, without having been able to allay the suspicions of the Burmese.

In the mean time, King Berring had not been idle. He fought, however, with various reverses of fortune, being one month at the head of a powerful army, and the next an outlawed rebel, without a follower. When they who had joined his standard were driven out of Arracan, they invariably sought refuge in Chittagong; and the protection which seemed thus to be afforded them in the British territories, so enraged the Burmese, that the Rajah of Arracan officially announced his intention of overrunning the country with an army 80,000 strong, unless all the principal insurgents were given up. Our force on the frontiers at the time being exceedingly small, it was necessary to have recourse to negotiation, to prevent, if possible, the threatened attack. Before any thing decisive, as to the course our Government should pursue with respect to the refugees, had been determined on, King Berring, who for a while had been in concealment, again made his appearance at the head of a considerable force. He gave battle to the Burmese, but was defeated, and his adherents again retired to Chittagong. This affair only served to exasperate still more the Rajah of

Arracan, who openly accused the British of a breach of faith, and declared a war inevitable. Our Government, however, was not to be menaced into submission. Its independent and strictly honourable line of conduct probably prevented the matter from coming to the extremity it otherwise would have reached. Towards the end of the year 1812, King Berring, who had again taken the field, was attacked by a British detachment, and defeated. This measure tended much to pacify the Burmese; and upon the succession of the Earl of Moira to the government of India, every cause of complaint which they could possibly have had against us was removed, by their being allowed to send small parties of their troops through our territories, in search of King Berring and his partisans. For some time longer, that indefatigable, but unfortunate chief, contrived to set at defiance the united efforts of his enemies; but his death, which took place in 1815, seemed to hold out some hope of greater tranquillity.

This hope, nevertheless, proved fallacious. The Burmese had of late years been brought into more immediate contact with their British neighbours, and were not a little startled to find a power established on their frontiers, capable not only of resisting all their attacks, but even, should occasion require, of shaking from its security the very centre of their dominions. This discovery cannot be supposed to have been very agreeable to the grasping and suspicious Court of Ava; and accordingly we find, that measures were speedily formed, upon an extensive scale, by which it was hoped effectually to crush the

prosperity and power of the Bengal government. Not only were active preparations carried on at home, but, under the pretence of collecting certain sacred Hindoo writings, a mission was despatched to Calcutta, for the purpose of exciting the upper provinces of Hindostan to unite with the Burmese in a simultaneous declaration of war. In 1818, the Marquis of Hastings had certain information that the Burmese monarch had secretly joined the Mahratta confederacy, which had, for its object, the entire subversion of our Indian empire. To afford the court of Ava some pretence for having recourse to open hostilities, a letter was received by the Governor-general in the July of that year, which, on behalf of the king of Ava, unceremoniously demanded the cession of the provinces of Chittagong, Ramoo, Moorshedabad, and Dacca, which were henceforth to become dependencies of the Burmese empire. To this demand, which was made through the medium of the Raja of Ramree, the Governor-general replied, by a letter to the viceroy of Pegue, couched in the following terms:—"That if the letter he had received, had really been written by order of the king of Ava, his Excellency lamented, that persons so incompetent to form a just notion of the power of the British nation in India, should have been able to practise on the king's judgment; that any hopes which the king might have been induced to entertain, that the British Government would be embarrassed by contests in other quarters, were entirely delusive; that we were indifferent to attack from the king of Ava, further than, as we should regard with concern, the

waste of lives in an unmeaning quarrel; that his Excellency trusted, however, that the king would perceive the folly of the counsellors who would plunge him into a calamitous war, by which the commerce of his empire would be wholly destroyed; and that if, as the Governor-general could not but believe, the Rajah of Ramree had, for some unworthy purpose of his own, assumed the tone of insolence and menace, exhibited in his letter, without the authority of the king, he hoped that a procedure so calculated to breed dissensions between two friendly states, would be visited by the king with the severe displeasure it deserved.”\*

The mild but decided tone of this answer, combined with the unexpected event of the Mahratta contest, kept the court of Ava quiet; and in the ensuing year (1819), the death of the king, Minderajee-praw, diverted still more effectually its attention for a short time from British affairs. Minderajee-praw, whose character is so well described by Colonel Symes, enjoyed a long and prosperous reign of thirty-seven years; at the end of which period, according to the inflated style of the Burmese state papers, “the immortal king, wearied with the fatigues of royalty, went up to amuse himself in the celestial regions.” He was succeeded, not by his son, who, during the period of Colonel Symes’ embassy, was the *Engy Tekien* or prince royal, and to whom Mindarajee-praw is said to have been much attached, but who died before his father, in consequence of which, his grandson, the

\* Extract of a despatch from Fort William, 17th March 1820.

prince's son, became heir to the throne. His claims, however, were not uncontested. The brothers of the late king, as is not unfrequently the case, when the laws of succession are not firmly established, became his decided enemies. But failing in their machinations, the Prince of Tonghoo, with his family and many of his friends were executed, and the Prince of Prome, whose daughter the new king had married, was thrown into prison, where he died soon afterwards. On the 2nd of November 1819, the Emperor was solemnly crowned at Ava.

The object to which his attention was first directed, was the reduction of the province of Cassay, on the northern frontier of the empire. This territory had been hitherto independent of Ava; but internal dissensions having arisen, and there being two claimants for the crown, one very naturally asked the assistance of the Burmese, and the other of the British. The former, ever willing to avail themselves of any opportunity for encreasing their own influence, marched an army into Assam, and placed a Rajah of their own choosing, tributary to their court, in the Government. The British, on the other hand, expressly refused to interfere in the internal affairs of foreign states. It seems impossible, however, for the Burmese to come into contact with any foreign nation without speedily picking a quarrel with them. Having gained possession of Assam, they found nothing beyond but the eastern boundary of Bengal, and it was not long before they manifested their desire to cross that boundary. The Rajah, who had sought our assistance, and who, as he maintained,

had been unjustly driven from his birthright, though he could not prevail upon the Bengal Government to give him any active support, was nevertheless allowed, upon the principle of neutrality which it adopted, to transport gunpowder and military stores through the British territories to Assam. This was a sufficient handle for the court of Ava. Their celebrated general Maha-bandoola was sent to take the command of their military force in Assam, and, soon after his arrival, it was intimated to the British local authorities, that if the Ex-Raja was allowed to remain in the Company's territories, he would be taken thence by force. The conciliating answer, however, made by the Company, once more had the effect of delaying an open rupture; and the war which the Burman emperor was at the time carrying on against his hereditary enemies, the Siamese, engrossed probably the greater part of his attention. The year 1822, therefore, passed over without any acts of hostility on either side. Subsequent events, however, speedily showed that the pacific and conceding disposition evinced by the Company only tended to increase the insolence and rapacity of the Burmese.

In 1823, various acts of aggression were systematically committed. Several of our Mugh subjects were attacked and killed on board their own boats in the Naaf river; and a party of the Company's elephant hunters were taken from within the British boundaries and carried prisoners to Arracan. Even these insulting acts might have been overlooked; but an attack made upon the British guard in the island of Shu-

paree was of a still more serious kind, and could be regarded in no other light than as an explicit declaration of undisguised hostility. We had retained the undisputed possession of this island for many years, and nothing but a determination to force us into a war could have suggested the attempt to wrest it from us. The attack was made on the 24th of September, by a body of six hundred Arracanese troops, who killed and wounded several of our soldiers, upon whom they came altogether unexpectedly. They were, however, speedily reinforced, and the enemy was driven out of the island. A remonstrance was also immediately addressed to the Court of Ummerapoora, but no answer was deigned to be returned. The Governor-general now became aware that there was but one line of conduct left for him to follow, and that further forbearance on his part would have been attributed to pusillanimity, and advantage taken of it accordingly. On the fifth of March, therefore, 1824, an official declaration of war was issued by the Government of Fort William—characterized not more strongly by its temperate firmness, than by its British frankness and honesty.

This step excited, as was to be expected, no inconsiderable sensation throughout our possessions in British India, as well as in this country, as soon as the news arrived. It was at Calcutta, however, from its vicinity to the Chittagong frontier, that its importance was principally felt. It was known there that one of the Burmese generals had already gasconadingly announced his intention of taking possession of the town, *preparatory to his march to England!* It was



destined, however, that ere long the arrogance of this haughty nation should be effectually tamed. The war opened with military operations on the frontiers of Sylhet and Chittagong, to both of which districts troops were speedily marched. It was in Sylhet and Assam that affairs of greatest consequence took place. Our troops there were under the command of Major Newton, who, in several engagements with the far superior forces of the Burmese, gained decisive advantages over them. The first success obtained by the enemy was in an affair which took place at Doodpatlee, after Colonel Bowen had arrived to the assistance of Major Newton with a force from Dacca. The Burmese, amounting to about 2,000, had, according to their invariable custom, stockaded themselves with unusual strength and care, and "fought," says Colonel Bowen, "with a bravery and obstinacy which I had never witnessed in any troops." The action lasted from early in the day till night-fall, when the British were obliged to retire with a severe loss. The Burmese, however, also suffered much; and soon after, evacuating their stockades, retreated in the direction of Assam.

Fresh troops were sent into Assam under the command of Colonel M'Morine, who, by the latter end of March, had penetrated as far as Gowa-hati. The Burmese government finding it necessary to concentrate their force in another quarter, withdrew the greater part of their troops from Assam, and left Colonel M'Morine in quiet possession of the country. In Chittagong, in the meantime, affairs were going on less successfully. Captain Noton held the chief command on this

frontier, but an error seems to have been committed in intrusting too few men to his charge. The small corps he commanded was attacked in May by a powerful body of Burmese, and totally defeated, Captain Noton and most of his brother officers being slain in the engagement. The alarm speedily reached Calcutta, before which it was imagined the Burmese would instantly make their appearance, there being no intermediate force to oppose their advance. In this emergency, the European inhabitants formed themselves into a militia, and a large proportion of the crews of the Company's ships were landed to aid in protecting the town. But the panic was soon discovered to be greater than the occasion required. The enemy did not think of approaching one step nearer than Ramoo, where, for a time, they took up their head-quarters.

While these events were passing on the northern frontiers of the Burman empire, a plan was matured by the Bengal government, the execution of which was to effect an entire change in the features of the present war. Hitherto, we had been acting principally on the defensive; but it was necessary, considering the enemy we had to deal with, to make it a leading object not more to repel aggression, than to humble arrogance and intimidate fool-hardiness. It was necessary to show the Burmese that we could not only endure, but inflict;—that as we were not easily roused into anger, so our animosity was only the more fearful when it at length broke forth. The measure which was about to be carried into effect was that of despatching a considerable force by sea to make a descent upon some part of the enemy's

coast, where probably such a visitation was but little expected. The force destined for this important expedition was supplied by the two Presidencies of Bengal and Madras; and, when united, was put under the command of Brigadier-General Sir Archibald Campbell. The place of rendezvous was the port of Cornwallis, in the Andaman islands, where the troops arrived by the 3d of May 1824. From thence Sir Archibald Campbell sailed on the 5th, direct for Rangoon, detaching one part of his force under Brigadier M'Reagh against the Island of Cheduba, and another under Major Wahab against the Island of Negrais. On the 10th the fleet anchored in the Rangoon river, and on the following morning sailed up to the town, in order of attack, receiving little or no molestation by the way.

The Burmese at Rangoon seem to have been taken completely by surprise; and when the news of the arrival of a British fleet spread over the country, nothing could exceed the wondering consternation of the inhabitants. In whatever virtues, however, the Burmese may be deficient, certainly courage is not of the number; and as soon as their first emotions of astonishment had subsided, they prepared at all hazards for a resolute, and, in this instance, we ought perhaps to say, patriotic defence. Perceiving their feebleness, and being not as yet sufficiently aware of their hardihood and folly, the British commander humanely forbore opening a fire upon the town, in expectation that its governor would offer him some terms of capitulation. But it was soon discovered that no such intention was entertained. A feeble and ill-directed fire was

commenced upon the ships from a sixteen-gun battery, which was in a very short time effectually silenced. The troops were then ordered into the boats to effect a landing, and in less than twenty minutes the British flag was seen flying in the town, without the loss of a single life, or the discharge of a single musket. It was only the houses of Rangoon, however, that were thus got possession of. The inhabitants had all betaken themselves to the jungles in the neighbourhood, and our troops found nothing but a collection of empty habitations to refresh themselves in after their fatigues. The quantity of ordnance captured was indeed considerable, but in general of a very imperfect description. The Islands of Cheduba and Negrais fell into our hands much about the same time, though not without a spirited opposition on the part of the inhabitants of both.

The prospects of our little army, now quartered in Rangoon, were any thing but encouraging. The town was empty, in the most literal sense of the word. Every attempt to establish any intercourse with the native Burmese, for the purpose of obtaining provisions, was found to be fruitless. The rainy season was just setting in, which in Eastern climates is always peculiarly unhealthy to European constitutions; and, as far as any accurate information could be procured, it was ascertained that his golden-footed Majesty was making preparations, on the most magnificent scale, "to cover the face of the earth with an innumerable host, and to drive back the wild foreigners into the sea from whence they came!" To add still further to the discom-

fort of Sir Archibald Campbell's situation, some disagreements unfortunately took place between the naval and land forces. It had been expected, it is true, that the mere capture of Rangoon, together with the two other maritime possessions of the Burmese, already alluded to, would have produced such an effect on the Court of Ava, that terms of peace would have been immediately proposed. Nothing, however, was further from the intentions of that proud Court; and subsequent events proved, that though the Burmese may be beaten, they will die rather than confess they have been so.

The Commander-in-Chief, therefore, finding that, as yet, no practical benefits had resulted from his success, and that, on the contrary, the almost impenetrable jungles which surround Rangoon were rapidly filling with troops from all quarters, admirably skilled in every species of desultory warfare, and prepared to drive him either once more into his ships, or, if he thought of advancing, to dispute every inch of ground with him, saw the necessity of having recourse immediately to bold and vigorous measures. His first object was, to ascertain the possibility of obtaining a sufficient number of boats, manned by skilful pilots, to convey a considerable part of his force up the Irawaddy. This river may be set down as the great high road of the Burman empire. Indeed all the knowledge which we possess of that country, was gathered by Colonel Symes, and our other envoys, upon its banks. It runs from north to south, through the whole of the kingdom of Ava; and to it alone is to be attributed the internal com-

mercial prosperity of the empire. Every village on its banks is obliged to furnish one or more war-boats, carrying from forty to fifty men each; and of these his Majesty can muster, on the shortest notice, four or five hundred. An impression appears to have been entertained by our Indian government, that, from the spirit of dissatisfaction which they supposed must necessarily exist in the minds of many of the inhabitants against the tyranny of their despotic monarch, they would be found, in numerous instances, willing to give all the aid in their power to the British. It was recollected, besides, that Rangoon was a town of Pegue, one of the conquered provinces of the Burman empire, and that, for a long period of years, the most determined hostility had existed between the two countries. There was perhaps nothing irrationally sanguine in the hopes which these considerations gave rise to, but they were entirely fallacious. Whatever complaints the Burmese might have among themselves against their government, and however severely the Peguers might continue to feel the subjection into which they had been reduced from a state of independence, yet, like the people of ancient Greece, at the appearance of a common foe, all these causes of internal dissension were forgotten. Not a single boatman acquainted with the navigation of the Irawaddy was to be procured; and whether inspired with fear or patriotism, but one desire was manifested, from the throne to the hovel, to shun all intercourse with the English. It would probably also have been dangerous to have ventured far up the Irawaddy

unless the co-operation of a land force could have been depended on ; and before that could be the case, it would be necessary to clear the way by some hard fighting. The design, therefore, was for the present abandoned.

In the meanwhile, the rainy season set in with all its attendant evils. The rain fell in such quantity, that it was impossible for our troops to keep the field, and act upon a regular system. Harassed, too, by continual incursions of the enemy, threatened with an approaching famine, and reduced by an epidemic, which broke out amongst them, to a state of the greatest debility, it seemed almost impossible for them to achieve any thing of importance. Neither the hostility, however, of the Burmese, nor of the climate, could subdue British courage. For six months, from May till December, our operations were confined to Rangoon and its vicinity, it being the determination of the enemy to prevent us, if possible, from advancing a step into the country. Our ultimate success in compelling them to retreat further into the interior, and thereby affording us an opportunity of following them, depended not so much on the decisive advantage gained in any one action, as on the continued judgment and skill which regulated the whole system of our military tactics. We never advanced a few miles out of Rangoon for the purpose either of dislodging the enemy from a position they had taken up, or of gaining possession of some post which appeared of importance, without being almost sure of achieving our object. But as soon as a certain resistance had been made, the Burmese

were accustomed to retreat leisurely from their stockades into the jungles, where, though we knew we had beaten them, it was impossible for us to follow. Many rencontres of this description took place, into the details of which it is unnecessary for us to enter. A short account of one or two of the most remarkable will suffice as a description of the whole,

On the 28th of May, the British and Burmese troops came into contact for the first time. Sir Archibald Campbell led his forces about five miles up the Rangoon river, and found the enemy had taken a position in one or two scattered villages, flanked on both sides by a jungle. Confident in the strength of their situation, they received the British with shouts and cries of "Come! come!" A heavy fire was immediately commenced upon our troops, whose muskets having suffered from rain, were so inefficient that it was necessary for them to close without loss of time. The Burmese were altogether unable to withstand the violence of our charge; but, shut in as they were in their own encampment, and thrown into irretrievable confusion by the impetuosity of our attack, their only alternative was to continue fighting with desperate resolution until they were cut to pieces. Being unaccustomed to give, they did not expect quarter, and in self-defence, therefore, our soldiers were unfortunately obliged to disregard the dictates of humanity. Having taken possession of the villages, in which about 400 Burmese lost their lives, Sir Archibald reconducted his troops to Rangoon.

Soon after this affair two deputies arrived



from the Burmese camp, under pretence of negotiating a peace, but in reality, only with the view of gaining time for the main body of the enemy to strengthen themselves as much as possible at Kemmindine, a village three miles above Rangoon, on an elevated situation, with a thick forest in its rear. They were intended perhaps to act also as spies, and report upon the condition and spirits of the British army. Whatever was their object nothing satisfactory was proposed by them in the interview they had with our Commissioners. Determined to convince the Burmese that we were not to be lulled into a treacherous security, our Commander, on the morning of the day after their departure, (10th June), ordered a general advance upon Kemmindine. The road was not left undisputed. About half way a strong stockade ran across it, the fruitless attempt to defend which cost the enemy two hundred men. The way being cleared, the column again moved forward, consisting of about 3,000 men, and by night-fall the troops had taken their position in many places within a hundred yards of where the enemy was posted. At daybreak on the following day, firing commenced, which upon our part, in less than two hours, produced a very visible breach in their fortifications. This together with the recollection of their discomfiture the day before, operated so powerfully on the Burmese, that notwithstanding the still existing strength of their stockade they thought proper quietly to evacuate the place during the cannonade. It was this facility of securing a retreat, assisted as they were by the chain of posts which

they occupied, and the thickness of the surrounding jungle, that particularly annoyed our troops, who, just in the very moment of victory, constantly found that their enemy had slipped as it were from between their very fingers. The object, however, which Sir Archibald Campbell had in view in making this attack, was fully accomplished. A terror of the British arms began to pervade the country; and, in the course of a few days, every stockade in the immediate vicinity of Rangoon was abandoned. In this, as well as in all his other expeditions on the banks of the river, the Commander-in-Chief received most effective and valuable assistance from the cooperation of the naval part of his force.

A short cessation from active hostilities took place, after the affair of Kemmindine; but both parties were preparing to renew operations with increased vigour. A reinforcement arrived at Rangoon from Madras; and the detachments which had taken possession of Cheduba and Negrais, returned very seasonably to the main army, now a good deal weakened from various causes. The Burmese, on their part, were not idle. Their former generals having failed in driving "the wild foreigners into the sea," had fallen into disgrace, and were succeeded by a senior officer of some reputation, who brought with him a considerable body of fresh troops. His object was, not so much to meet the British in open fight, as to hem them in within a limited space, and harass them with a protracted system of desultory warfare. To such proceedings, it was of course not our interest quietly to submit;

and accordingly, various expeditions were undertaken for the purpose of breaking through the cordon which the enemy was attempting to form round us. In one of these, ten stockades were taken in one day, and the new general, with many other chiefs of rank, were killed.

Still, however, no thoughts of peace were entertained by the Burmese; and it was now evident, that whatever successes were gained as long as our operations were confined to the neighbourhood of Rangoon, no effect would be produced by them on the Court of Ava. Unprovided, therefore, as Sir Archibald Campbell was, with the means of advancing into the interior, he resolved to have recourse to the only other alternative left him, which was to intimidate the Burmese still further, by the capture of some of their southern maritime possessions. An expedition was fitted out for this purpose, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Miles, who, in the course of a few months, made himself master of Tavoy, Mergui, and Tenasserim, seaports of much importance on the eastern shores of the empire.

Two of the king's brothers, the princes of Tonghoo and Sarawuddy, now took the command of the army. The one fixed his headquarters at Pegue, and the other at Donabew, both at a considerable distance from Rangoon. Along with them came a body of astrologers, who were most probably kept in pay by the Burmese government, as useful engines by which to act on the superstition of the people; and likewise a party of troops, called the King's Invulnerables, from the belief entertained, on

affected to be entertained, both by themselves and their countrymen, that the fire of an enemy could not injure them. Notwithstanding the extensive nature of their preparations, however, and the confidence they expressed in their own success, the operations of this new armament ended as disastrously as those of any which had preceded it. Instead of gaining any advantage over the British, they were invariably driven back with considerable loss, as often as they attempted to approach our encampments. Yet it is not to be denied or concealed, that the Burmese are no contemptible antagonists: they are constitutionally brave, they are trained to arms from their cradle, and there is a persevering obstinacy in their style of fighting, which, with troops less perfectly disciplined than those of England, would have every chance of being ultimately crowned with success.

But the golden-footed Monarch of Ava had found out, at length, that, however he might at first have affected to despise the small army which had taken possession of Rangoon, 600 miles distant from his capital, it was more than a match for the best generals he could send against it, followed by thousands of his favourite troops. He saw the necessity, therefore, of collecting his energies for a yet more powerful effort. His forces, he found, were too much scattered; he was convinced that he was attempting to do too much at once. He recalled, therefore, the armies he had sent into Assam and Arracan; and, concentrating the whole military power of his kingdom, he gave the entire command to Maha Bandoola, whom we have had occasion to

mention already, and whose reputation, from his partial successes over the British in Chittagong, stood exceedingly high. Bandoola, as we have already related, had advanced to Ramoo, where he was probably making preparations for an expedition into Bengal; and it is not unlikely that he found it exceedingly disagreeable to be awakened from his dream of future victory, by being recalled to defend his own country from invasion. His retreat from Ramoo, and subsequent march through Arracan, (which in the midst, as it was, of the rainy season, must have been a peculiarly arduous one,) relieved the inhabitants of Calcutta from considerable anxiety; and, shortly afterwards, enabled our troops in that quarter to advance with little opposition into the very interior of Arracan, taking possession of the capital itself.

As soon as Maha Bandoola arrived at Ava, every honour and attention was conferred upon him by his sovereign; and after a short delay in the capital, he set out for Donabew, accompanied by a large fleet of war-boats, which carried down the river strong reinforcements of men and military stores. We were not, however, unprepared to receive these new enemies; and some overtures of a friendly nature, which we had a short time before received from the Siamese, tended to inspire us with additional confidence. As it was now also clearly foreseen, that an advance towards the capital of the empire would be necessary before we could expect to intimidate the Burman monarch into a desire for peace, 500 native artisans had been sent to Rangoon from Chittagong, who were busily employed in pre-

paring boats to convey our troops up the Irrawaddy. The arrival, likewise, of several battalions of British and native infantry, as well as of some troops of cavalry, added considerably to our numerical and actual force. Towards the end of November, the largest and best appointed army which the Burman government had yet sent into the field, marched down from Donabew, and made their appearance in the neighbourhood of Rangoon, with the intention of driving us first from our position at Kemmindine, and then of forcing the scattered remains of our army to seek for safety in their ships. The name of the Commander-in-Chief, Bandoola, was in itself a tower of strength; and there was not probably a Burman into whose imagination the thought ever for a moment entered, that this invincible leader could, by any possibility, be unsuccessful.

Both armies met for the first time on the 1st of December; and as the particulars of their first engagement, where so much talent was displayed on both sides, cannot fail to be read with interest, we shall make no apology for introducing in this place an extract from the London Gazette Extraordinary of April 24, 1825,—consisting of

“Copy of a Letter from Brigadier-General Sir A. Campbell, K. C. B., to George Swinton, Esq., dated Head-Quarters, Rangoon, 9th December 1824.

“Sir,—The long-threatened, and, on my part, no less anxiously wished for event, has at length taken place. Maha Bandoola, said to be accompanied by the Princes of Tonghoo and Sarawuddy, appeared in front of my position on the

morning of the 1st instant, at the head of the whole united force of the Burman empire, amounting, upon the most moderate calculation, to from fifty to sixty thousand men, apparently well armed, with a numerous artillery, and a body of Cassay horse. Their haughty leader had insolently declared his intention of leading us in captive chains to grace the triumph of the Golden Monarch; but it has pleased God to expose the vanity of his idle threats, and crown the heroic efforts of my gallant little army with a most complete and signal victory.

“The enemy had assembled his forces in the heavy jungle in our front, during the night of the 30th ult.; and, being well aware of his near approach, I had previously made every necessary arrangement for his reception, in whatever way he might think proper to leave his impervious camp. The absence of Lieutenant-Colonel Godwin at Martaban, and of a strong detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Mallet, which I had sent to display the British flag in the ancient capital of Pegue, had much weakened my force; but I had been too long familiar with the resolute resolution of British troops, to have felt any regret that fortune had given me an opportunity of contending with Bandoola and his formidable legions, even under circumstances of temporary disadvantage.

“Early in the morning of the 1st inst., the enemy commenced his operations by a smart attack upon our post at Kemmindine, commanded by Major Yates, and garrisoned by the 26th Madras Native Infantry, with a detachment of the Madras European Regiment, supported on

the river by as strong a naval force as could be spared. As the day became light, it discovered numerous, and, apparently, formidable masses of the advancing enemy issuing from the jungle, and moving, at some distance, upon both our flanks, for the purpose of surrounding us, which I allowed them to effect without interruption, leaving us only the narrow channel of the Rangoon river unoccupied in our rear.

“Bandoola had now fully exposed to me his plan of operations, and my own resolution was instantly adopted of allowing, and even encouraging him to bring forth his means and resources from the jungle to the more open country on his left, where I knew I could at any time attend him to advantage.

“The right corps of the Burmese army had crossed to the Dallah side of the Rangoon river, and in the course of the morning was observed in several divisions crossing the plain towards the site of the ruined village of Dalla, where it took post in the neighbouring jungle, sending on a division to occupy the almost inaccessible ground on the bank of the river, and from which they soon opened a distant fire upon the shipping. Another division immediately took ground in front of Kemmindine, and for six successive days tried in vain every effort that hope of success and dread of failure could call forth, to drive the brave 26th and a handful of Europeans from this post, while tremendous fire-rafts, and crowds of war-boats, were every day employed in the equally vain endeavour to drive the shipping from their station off the place.

“The enemy’s right wing and centre occupied



a range of hills immediately in front of the great Dagon pagoda, covered with so thick a forest as to be impenetrable to all Burman troops, and their left extended nearly two miles further, along a lower and more open ridge to the village of Puzendoon, where their extreme left rested. They were no sooner thus placed in position, than muskets and spears were laid aside for the pick-axe and shovel, and in an incredibly short space of time every part of their line out of the angle was strongly and judiciously entrenched.

"In the afternoon of the 1st, I observed an opportunity of attacking the enemy's left to advantage, and ordered Major Sale, with 400 men from the 13th Light Infantry, and 18th Madras Native Infantry, under Major Dennie of the former, and Captain Ross of the latter corps, to move forward to the point I had selected, and I never witnessed a more dashing charge than was made on this occasion by his Majesty's 3th, while the 18th Native Infantry followed their example with a spirit that did them honour, carrying all opposition before them. They burst through the entrenchments, carrying dismay and terror into the enemy's ranks, great numbers of whom were slain, and the party returned loaded with arms, standards, and other trophies. Having correctly ascertained everything I required, I now, as I originally determined, abstained from giving any serious interruption to the indefatigable labour of the opposing army, patiently waiting until I saw the whole of their material fully brought forward and within my reach. About sunset in the evening, a cloud of skirmishers were pushed

forward close under the north-east angle of the pagoda, who, taking advantage of the many pagodas and strong ground on our front, commenced a harassing and galling fire upon the works. I at once saw we should suffer from their fire, if not dislodged, therefore ordered two companies of the 38th regiment, under Captain Piper (an officer I have often had occasion to mention), to advance and drive them back. Were it permitted, on such an occasion, to dwell upon the enthusiastic spirit of my troops, I would feel a pleasure in recounting the burst of rapture that followed every order to advance against their audacious foe; but it is sufficient to remark, that the conduct of these two companies was most conspicuous. They quickly gained their point, and fully acted up to the character they have ever sustained. At daylight, on the morning of the 2d, finding the enemy had very much encroached during the night, and had entrenched a height in front of the north gate of the pagoda, which gave them an enfilading fire upon part of our line, I directed Captain Wilson, of the 38th regiment, with two companies of the corps, and one hundred men of the 28th Madras Native Infantry, to drive them from the hill. No order was ever more rapidly or handsomely obeyed. The brave Sepoys, vying with their British comrades in forward gallantry, allowed the appalled Burmese no time to rally, but drove them from one breast-work to another, fighting them in the very holes they had dug finally to prove their graves.

“In the course of this day, Colonel Mallett’s detachment returned from Pegue, having found

the old city completely deserted, and gave me the additional means of attacking the enemy the moment the time arrived.

“During the 3d and 4th, the enemy carried on his labours with indefatigable industry; and but for the inimitable practice of our artillery, commanded by Captain Murray, in the absence, from indisposition, of Lieutenant-Colonel Hopkinson, we must have been severely annoyed by the incessant fire from his trenches.

“The attacks upon Kemmagine continued with unabating violence; but the unyielding spirit of Major Yates and his steady troops, although exhausted with fatigue and want of rest, baffled every attempt on shore; while Captain Ryves, with his Majesty's sloop *Sophia*, the Honourable Company's cruizer *Teignmouth*, and some flotilla and row gunboats, nobly maintained the long-established fame of the British navy, in defending the passage of the river against the most furious assaults of the enemy's war-boats, advancing under cover of the most tremendous fire-rafts, which the unwearied exertions of British sailors could alone have conquered.

“Captain Ryves lost no opportunity of coming in contact with the much vaunted boats of Ava; and in one morning, five out of six, each mounting a heavy piece of ordnance, were boarded and captured by our men-of-war's boats, commanded by Lieutenant Kellett of his Majesty's ship *Arachne*, and Lieutenant Goldfinch of the *Sophia*, whose intrepid conduct merits the highest praise.

“The enemy having apparently completed his left wing with its full complement of artillery

and warlike stores, I determined to attack that part of his line early on the morning of the 5th. I requested Captain Chadds, the senior naval officer here, to move up to the Puzendoon creek during the night, with the gun-flotilla, bomb-ketch, &c. and commence a cannonade on the enemy's rear at daylight. This service was most judiciously and successfully performed by that officer, who has never yet disappointed me in my most sanguine expectations. At the same time, two columns of attack were formed, agreeably to orders I had issued on the preceding evening, composed of details from the different regiments of the army. The first, consisting of 1,100 men, I placed under the orders of that gallant officer, Major Sale, and directed him to attack and penetrate the centre of the enemy's line; the other, consisting of 600 men, I intrusted to Major Walker, of the 3d Madras Native Light Infantry, with orders to attack their left, which had approached to within a few hundred yards of Rangoon. At seven o'clock, both columns moved forward to the point of attack; both were led to my perfect satisfaction; and both succeeded with a degree of ease, their intrepid and undaunted conduct undoubtedly insured; and I directed Lieutenant Archibald, with a troop of the Governor-general's body guard, which had been landed the preceding evening, to follow the column under Major Sale, and take advantage of any opportunity which might offer, to charge.

"The enemy were defeated and dispersed in every direction; and the body guard, gallantly charging over the broken and swampy ground, completed their terror and dismay. The Cassay

horse fled, mixed with the retreating infantry; and all their artillery, stores, and reserve depots, which had cost them so much toil and labour to get up, with a great quantity of small arms, gilt chattahs, standards, and other trophies, fell into our hands. Never was victory more complete or more decided; and never was the triumph of discipline and valour, over the disjointed efforts of irregular courage, and infinitely superior numbers, more conspicuous. Majors Dennie and Thornhill, of the 13th Light Infantry, and Major Gore of the 89th, were distinguished by the steadiness with which they led their men; but it is with deep regret I have to state, the loss we have sustained, in the death of Major Walker, one of India's best and bravest soldiers, who fell while leading his column into the enemy's entrenchments; when the command devolved upon Major Wahab who gallantly conducted the column during the rest of the action; and I observed the 34th Madras Native Light Infantry, on this occasion, conspicuously forward.

“The Burmese left wing thus disposed of, I patiently waited its effect upon the right, posted in so thick a forest as to render any attack in that quarter in a great measure impracticable.

“On the 6th I had the pleasure of observing that Bandoola had brought up the scattered remnant of his defeated left to strengthen his right and centre, and continued day and night employed in carrying on his approaches in front of the great pagoda. I ordered the artillery to slacken its fire, and the infantry to keep wholly out of sight, allowing him to carry on his fruitless labour with little annoyance or molestation. As

I expected, he took system for timidity; and on the morning of the 7th instant, I had his whole force posted in my immediate front—his first line entrenched so close, that the soldiers in their barracks could distinctly hear the insolent threats and reproaches of the Burman bravoës.

“The time had now arrived to undeceive them in their sanguine, but ill-founded hopes. I instantly made my arrangements, and at half past eleven o’clock every thing was in readiness to assault the trenches in four columns of attack, under the superintendance of Lieutenant Colonel Miles, my second in command, and commanded by Lieutenant Colonels Mallet, Parlby, Brodie, and Captain Wilson of the 38th Regiment. At a quarter before twelve I ordered every gun that would bear upon the trenches to open, and their fire was kept up with an effect that never was surpassed; Major Sale at the same time, as directed, making a diversion on the enemy’s left and rear. At twelve o’clock the cannonade ceased, and the columns moved forward to their respective points of attack. Every thing was done under my own immediate eye, but where all behaved so nobly, I cannot particularize; but I must in justice state, that Captain Wilson’s and Lieutenant Colonel Parlby’s divisions first made an impression, from which the enemy never recovered. They were driven from all their works without a check, abandoning all their guns, with a great quantity of arms of every description; and certainly not the least amusing part of their formidable preparations was a great number of ladders for escalading the Great Pagoda, found in rear of their position.

The total defeat of Bandoola's army was now most fully accomplished. His loss, in killed and wounded, from the nature of the ground, it is impossible to calculate; but I am confident I do not exceed the fairest limit, when I state it at 5,000 men. In every other respect the mighty host, which so lately threatened to overwhelm us, now scarcely exists. It commenced its inglorious flight during last night. Humbled, dispersing, and deprived of their arms, they cannot, for a length of time, again meet us in the field, and the lesson they have now received will, I am confident, prove a salutary antidote to the native arrogance and vanity of the Burmese nation. Thus vanished the hopes of Ava: and those means which the Burmese government were seven months in organizing for our annihilation, have been completely destroyed by us in the course of seven days. Of 300 pieces of ordnance that accompanied the grand army, 240 are now in our camp, and in muskets their loss is to them irreparable.

"Our loss in killed and wounded, although severe, will not, I am sure, be considered great for the important services we have had the honour to perform.

"Of my troops I cannot say enough; their valour was only equalled by the cheerful patience with which they bore long and painful privations. My Europeans fought like Britons, and proved themselves worthy of the country that gave them birth; and, I trust, I do the gallant Sepoys justice when I say, that never did troops more strive to obtain the palm of honour, than they to rival their European comrades in every thing that marks the steady, true, and daring soldier.

“My obligations to Captains Chadds and Ryves, and the officers and seamen of his Majesty’s navy, are great and numerous. In Captain Chadds himself I have always found that ready alacrity to share our toils and dangers, that has ever characterized the profession he belongs to; and the most cordial zeal in assisting and co-operating with me on every occasion. I have also to notice the good conduct of the Honourable Company’s cruizers, the gun-flotilla, and row-boats; nor ought I to omit mentioning the handsome conduct of Captain Binny, acting agent for the Bengal transports, in volunteering both his European crew and ship for any service. On the present occasion she was anchored off Dallah, and sustained some loss from the enemy’s fire. I may also add, that every transport in the river was equally anxious to contribute every possible assistance to the public service.”

Notwithstanding the defeat, so unexpected on his part, which Bandoola thus sustained, not many days elapsed before that indefatigable leader succeeded in rallying his scattered forces, and with a body of about 25,000 men returned to within three miles of the Pagoda alluded to in Sir Archibald Campbell’s despatch, and “commenced entrenching and stockading,” in the words of that General, “with a judgment in point of position such as would do credit to the best instructed engineers of the most civilized and warlike nations.” This position, however, Sir Archibald determined to attack on the 15th of December; and from the admirable manner in which the fire of the artillery was directed, in less than fifteen minutes the columns destined for carrying the breach were in possession, not only



of the enemy's work, but of his camp, which was left standing, with all the baggage, and a great proportion of his arms and ammunition. "When it is known," says the Commander-in-Chief, "that 1,300 British infantry stormed and carried by assault the most formidable entrenched and stockaded works I ever saw, defended by upwards of 20,000 men, I trust it is unnecessary for me to say more in praise of soldiers performing such a prodigy; future ages will scarcely believe it." It is proper, however, to mention, that upon this occasion Bandoola did not command in person; the chief to whom he had intrusted that duty was mortally wounded whilst gallantly defending the stockade.

On the same day on which this very brilliant action took place, under the superintendence of Captain Chadds, the senior naval officer at Rangoon, an attack was made upon a fleet of thirty-two of the enemy's war-boats. Of these, principally through the aid of the *Diana* steam-boat, which accompanied this expedition, and the celerity of whose motions, even against wind and tide, inspired the Burmese with the greatest consternation, thirty were captured, having been previously abandoned by their crews, who, upon the approach of the steam-boat, threw themselves into the river, and were either drowned or swam ashore, apparently in an agony of terror. In consequence of these continued disasters, Maha Bandoola found it necessary to lead back his army much shattered to Donabew.

It was now for the first time that the British army at Rangoon found itself in undisturbed possession of a considerable district of country,

and active preparations were immediately made for taking every advantage of this new situation of affairs. Orders were issued to prepare for a speedy advance into the interior; and besides the continual arrival of transports from the Presidencies, this object was not a little favoured by the return of many of the inhabitants of the country to their former places of residence in Rangoon and its vicinity, and by their consenting to open a regular traffic with the British in all articles of consumption. Some of the native watermen too volunteered into our service, by whose assistance we were enabled to obviate many of the difficulties which our ignorance of the navigation of the Irawaddy would otherwise have occasioned.

Certainly at this moment the situation of the Burmese monarch was any thing but enviable. The most numerous armies, headed by the most skilful generals he could send into the field, had been defeated again and again. The victorious troops at Rangoon were about to march for Ava; from the north-east frontier of Arracan a large force under Brigadier-general Morison was preparing to enter his empire, and if possible to co-operate with Sir Archibald Campbell's division: from Sylhet, another army under Brigadier-general Shouldham, threatened to advance to the capital through Cassay; in Assam, Lieutenant-colonel Richards was busy with a small but active corps; and on the south, the Siamese, who had already manifested their friendly dispositions towards the British, held out hopes of their making a movement in conjunction with our columns, which were to march up the Ira-

waddy. His celestial Majesty, however, is not easily terrified, or, if he is, he has too much pride to show it. Upon the present occasion he boldly stood at bay, and manfully prepared for resistance at whatever cost.

It was on the 13th of February 1825, that the general advance of the British troops commenced. They were divided into two columns; the one about 2,000 strong, proceeding by land, under the command of Sir Archibald Campbell; and the other by water, under Brigadier-general Cotton, consisted of about 1,000 European infantry, with a powerful train of artillery, which was embarked in a flotilla of sixty boats, commanded by Captain Alexander. The land column was to proceed, in the first place, up the Lain river, and effect a junction with Brigadier Cotton as near Donabew as possible. A smaller force under Major Sale was also ordered to take possession of Bassein, after which it likewise was to join the main body at Donabew. Brigadier M'Reagh, with the remainder of the troops, was left in command at Rangoon, and was to employ himself in superintending the fortification of that town, which went on briskly.

The land force under General Campbell marched to Lain, without meeting with any resistance whatever. Its distance from Rangoon is about fifty miles; but, owing to the uncultivated state of the country, and the absence of every thing like regular roads, the troops, though in high health and spirits, could seldom advance more than eight miles a day. They left Rangoon on the 14th, and did not reach Lain till the 23d of February. The town, though the capital of a

pretty extensive district, was found quite deserted, and a halt was made at it for only a single night; after which, the column resumed its march towards Donabew with all possible expedition. By the 7th of March, it was near enough that place to hear distinctly the sound of a cannonade, which the marine division under General Cotton, having arrived first, had already opened upon it. The operations of this division, in passing up the Irawaddy, had necessarily been much more arduous than those of the land column. Various stockades and entrenchments had been thrown up upon the banks to oppose its progress. At Paulang, in particular, a very spirited affair took place, where between four and five thousand Burmese were driven back from very powerful fortifications with considerable loss. Upon this and other similar occasions, the shells and rockets used by the British were found of the greatest service, both as tending to throw the enemy into confusion, and to save the lives of our men. After these successes, Brigadier-General Cotton proceeded direct to Donabew; and though Sir Archibald Campbell had not yet come up, he determined upon attacking the enemy, who, headed by Bandoola, mustered about 15,000 strong, and had fortified their position in the most skilful and soldier-like manner. An outer stockade, which our marine force first attacked, was carried with a loss to the enemy of about 400 men. The attempt made upon the second stockade was less successful; and, after being exposed for a considerable time to a heavy fire, General Cotton found it necessary to re-embark the troops he had landed for

the purpose of making the assault, and dropped down four miles below Donabew, there to wait until reinforced. Our loss in this second affair was serious.

. In the mean while, Sir Archibald Campbell, not altogether aware of the formidable resistance which was to be made at Donabew, had pushed on several days' march towards Prome, a city of some magnitude, and which he understood was the head-quarters of the enemy. On the 11th of March, he received despatches informing him of the failure of the attack upon the outworks at the former place, and, after some deliberation, he judged it proper to retrace his steps to the assistance of General Cotton. On the 14th, and four following days, his troops were employed in crossing the Irawaddy, which it was necessary to do before they could reach Donabew. The task was one of no slight difficulty; but in the words of Major Snodgrass, "energy and perseverance, aided by the cheerful and hearty exertions of the soldiers, finally triumphed over every obstacle." It was not, however, till the 25th, that the army arrived within gun-shot distance of Donabew.

The main stockade, at the fort of Donabew, was upwards of a mile in length, composed of solid teak beams, from 15 to 17 feet high, and from 5 to 8 hundred yards broad. Behind this were the brick ramparts of the place, surmounted by about 150 guns. The whole was surrounded by a large deep ditch filled with spikes, nails, and holes; and the ditch itself was shut in with several rows of strong railing, together with an abatis of great breadth. Our camp was hardly pitched,

before a sortie was made from the fort, which, though of a formidable appearance at first, ended in smoke. For several days skirmishes of a desultory kind took place before the works, without producing any serious impression on either side. On the first of April, a continued fire of rockets was kept up upon our part, with little or no return from the enemy, a circumstance which occasioned some surprise. The cause, however, was satisfactorily enough explained next day. The fort of Donabew was nearly evacuated, for on the morning of the first, Maha Bandoola, while going his rounds, had been killed on the spot by a rocket; and such was the panic which instantly took possession of the garrison, that the surviving chiefs found it utterly impossible to keep it any longer together. Just as the enemy's rear guard fled towards the neighbouring jungle on the 2d, our army took possession of the place, and found in it a great store not only of guns and ammunition, but of grain sufficient for many months' consumption.

The death of Maha Bandoola was probably the greatest misfortune which the Burman monarch had yet sustained. There can be little doubt that he possessed talents of no mean order, and the respect, approaching to awe, which he inspired in his soldiers, made them a great deal more formidable when under his command than that of any one else. One of the prisoners found in the fort related the particulars of his General's death in these words: "I belong to the household of Menghi Maha Bandoola, and my business was to beat the great drums that are hanging in the veranda of the Wongee's house. Yesterday

morning, between the hours of nine and ten, while the chief's dinner was preparing, he went out take his usual morning walk round the works, and arrived at his observatory, (that tower with a red ball upon it), where, as there was no firing, he sat down upon a couch which was kept there for his use. While he was giving orders to some of his chiefs, the English began throwing bombs, and one of them falling close to the General, burst, and killed him on the spot. His body was immediately carried away and burnt to ashes. His death was soon known to every body in the stockade, and the soldiers refused to stay and fight under any other commander. The chiefs lost all influence over their men, every individual thinking only of providing for his own personal safety."

With as little delay as possible the British force now pushed on to Prome, well aware that decisive measures alone would produce any effect on the Court of Ava. No interruption of a hostile nature was attempted to be made; but letters were received, in the course of the march, from the Burmese authorities at Prome, intimating the willingness of the government to conclude a peace. As it was suspected, however, that this was merely a stratagem for the sake of gaining time, Sir Archibald Campbell replied, that as soon as he had taken military possession of Prome, he would be happy to listen to any overtures of an amicable nature which might be made to him. The prudence of this determination was very clearly perceived when the army arrived before that city, where every preparation was making for a vigorous defence. The cele-

rity of our motions, however, was too much for the enemy, who, being taken by surprise before their fortifications were completed, retired during the night of the 24th of April, and, on the 25th General Campbell entered the place without firing a shot.

As the rainy season was about to set in, and the campaign therefore necessarily near a close, our head-quarters were fixed at Prome, from whence a detachment marched, during May, towards Tonghoo, taking possession of the intermediate country, and returning about the end of May to Prome. The Prince of Sarrawuddy, who now headed the remnant of the Burmese army, fell back upon Melloone, and busied himself in raising recruits, to the number of about 30,000, for the ensuing campaign.

During the stay of the British army at Prome, every thing was done to conciliate the good will and secure the confidence of such of its native inhabitants as returned to it. The consequences were particularly happy. The tide of population flowed back ; and not only at Prome, but in all the towns and districts which had been already passed, an active and cheerful people returned to live in unmolested quiet, perfectly satisfied of the good faith and honesty of their invaders. In fact, the whole of Pegue, as well as a considerable portion of Ava Proper, may be considered as having, at this time, been under the jurisdiction of the British. We had certainly conquered the country so far ; and, without attempting any material alteration of their ordinary modes of civil government, we found it necessary to supply the place of their



magistrates and other creatures of the crown, who had for the most part absconded, by organizing a system of official authority, to which we gave the sanction of our approval and assistance. Into the details of these arrangements it is unnecessary here to enter. It is sufficient to say, that they were at once simple and effective; and reflect no small credit on our Commander-in-Chief and his advisers.

The resources of the Court of Ava, great as their efforts had already been, were yet far from being exhausted. During the period in which there was a necessary cessation of hostilities, a new army was organized, amounting to 70,000 men, and all thoughts of peace appeared to be laid aside. It was the earnest desire, however, of our Commander-in-Chief to avoid, if possible, the shedding of more blood; and, in the beginning of October, he despatched a letter to the Burmese head-quarters, urging strongly upon their chiefs the propriety of advising their sovereign to listen to the lenient terms of peace he proposed. In consequence of this letter, a meeting took place at Neoun-Ben-Zeik, between Commissioners appointed on both sides; but after much useless conversation prolonged to a ridiculous length by the Burmese, it was found impossible to prevail upon them to agree to the proposals we made; and soon after the Burmese Commissioners had returned to head-quarters, the army advanced in battle array to the very gates of Prome, its General having previously honoured Sir Archibald Campbell with the following laconic epistle:—"If you wish for peace, you may go away; but if you ask either money

or territory, no friendship can exist between us. This is Burman custom."—It was not long before "Burman custom" underwent a change.

To oppose the formidable force which now threatened to shut us in, and bury us among the ruins of Prome, we were able to muster an army of only 5,000 men, of whom only 3,000 were British. It seemed to be the wish of the Burmese leaders not to risk a general engagement, but to proceed by the slower, though perhaps more certain method of blockade. As soon as these intentions were discovered, it was resolved to attack the enemy at once, without allowing him more time for strengthening his position. On the 1st of December, our marine and land forces advanced at the same moment; and, after a well contested fight of some hours, the Burmese were driven back, with much slaughter, to a stockade they had erected some miles distant on the heights of Napadec. It was remarked, as a curious feature of this engagement, that three young and handsome women, evidently of high rank, fought with the most persevering obstinacy and courage among the ranks of the Burmese, recalling to the recollection of our officers all they had ever read of the Amazons of earlier age. It was believed that at least two of these ladies perished in the field. The Burmese General, Ma Nemiow, and many of the Chobwas, or tributary princes, who had grown grey in the service of their sovereign, also lost their lives on this day. But, after all, our troops had only achieved half of what it was necessary for them to do. Until the enemy was driven from his formidable position at Napadec, we could

not congratulate ourselves on having gained any decisive victory. On the 2nd of December, therefore, and the four following days, the army was employed in probably the most arduous duty it had yet undertaken,—that of forcing the heights of Napadce. They were fortified with unexampled strength, although the natural obstacles they presented made artificial means of defence almost unnecessary. All things considered, we do not think we can be accused of giving way to national vanity when we assert, that none but British soldiers powerfully assisted by a flotilla commanded by British sailors, could have succeeded in steadily advancing from one stockade to another, under the continued volleys of the Burmese, and in driving at the point of the bayonet, without returning a shot, their opponents from a position three miles in extent. On the 5th, the victory was complete. Every division of the Burmese army, and there were several, had been beaten in succession; and, completely disheartened, the fugitives dispersed themselves in all directions, wherever the woods or the jungles seemed to offer concealment.

It was now determined to lose no time in advancing to Ava itself, which is about three hundred miles distant from Prome; and on the 9th of December the march was commenced. On the 29th our army reached Melloone, about half-way between Ava and Prome, having seen nothing on the way but a deserted country, covered with the wounded, the dead, and the dying. The Burmese monarch was at last awakened to something like a becoming knowledge of the situation in which he stood; and at Melloone, a flag of

truce was sent to meet us, and to intimate the arrival of a Commissioner from Ava, with full powers to conclude a treaty of peace. That this was really the case, was attested by the amicable conduct of the enemy's troops who were assembled at Melloone. Our army, therefore, halted on the opposite side of the river, and a barge was moored in the middle, where the first meeting with the new delegate was to take place. On the 1st of January, the Commissioners of both nations met. The demand made upon our part of a crore of rupees, as well as of the cession of Arracan, and the restoration of Cassay, was what principally startled the Burmese Commissioners; but, at length, finding it impossible to make us alter our terms, the treaty was agreed to and signed, fifteen days being allowed for obtaining the ratification of the King. At the expiration of that period, it was communicated to us from Melloone, that no answer had yet been received from Ava, and a further delay of some six or eight days was requested. But as this must evidently have been a preconcerted scheme, suspicions were roused of the sincerity of that designing court, and Sir Archibald Campbell gave the Burmese the choice of only two alternatives, either to evacuate Melloone, and allow him to take possession of it, in which case he would remain quiet for a short time longer, or to prepare for an assault, which he would make upon it that very night. The Burmese, with much courage, instantly prepared for their defence. Though not inferior in bravery, however, the military tactics of the Burmese will not for a moment bear any comparison with

ours. Early on the 19th January 1826, the British standard was erected on the walls of Melloone, 15,000 men having been driven out of the town by, comparatively, a mere handful. In the house of Prince Memiaboo, a half-brother of the King, who had taken the command, was found money to the amount of from 30 to 40,000 rupees; and what was still more surprising, though perhaps not quite so agreeable, both the English and Burmese copies of the treaty lately made, signed and sealed as they had been at the meeting, and bearing, consequently, undeniable evidence of their never having been perused by the King. "It is no easy matter," says an officer from whose work we have already quoted, "to divine what object the Court of Ava could have had in view in opening negotiations they had no intention of abiding by, or what possible result they could have anticipated from a short and profitless delay, which to us was in every point of view desirable, as much to allow the men to recover from the debilitating effects of their late fatigue, as to afford time for collecting cattle from the interior, and sufficient supplies of every description for prosecuting our journey along a sacked and plundered line of country."—"Memiaboo and his beaten army," adds Major Snodgrass, "retired from the scene of their disasters with all possible haste, and the British Commander prepared to follow him up without delay. Before, however, commencing his march, he despatched a messenger with the unratified treaty to the Kee Wongee, as well to show the Burmese chiefs that their perfidy was discovered, as to give them the means of still performing their engagements;—

but merely telling the latter in his note, that, in the hurry of departure from Melloone, he had forgotten a document which he might now find more useful and acceptable to his government than they had a few days previously considered it. The Wongee and his colleague politely returned their best thanks for the paper; but observed, that the same hurry that had caused the loss of the treaty, had compelled them to leave behind a large sum of money, which they also much regretted, and which they were sure the British General only waited an opportunity of returning."

Our army now resumed its march upon Ava. On the 31st of January, it was met by a Doctor Price, an American missionary, and an Englishman of the name of Sandford, assistant surgeon of the Royal Regiment (who had been taken prisoner some months before), and who were now sent on their parole of honour to communicate the sincere desire which his celestial Majesty at last entertained for peace, and to ascertain the lowest terms upon which it would be granted. The terms offered at Melloone were renewed, and the British General having promised not to advance for twelve days nearer their capital than Pagahm-mow, the two delegates returned to Ava. There can be little doubt that the Burmese monarch now saw the necessity for peace, and was therefore anxious to secure it; but the terms proposed, lenient as they were, he found dreadfully galling to his pride. At all hazards, therefore, he resolved upon one effort more, and if that failed, peace was to be immediately concluded. On the fall of Melloone, he made an appeal to the

patriotism and generosity of his subjects. He represented himself as tottering on his throne, and the immortal dominion of Ava as about to pass away into the hands of strangers. To the troops which he now collected, to the amount of about 40,000 men, he gave the honourable appellation of "Retrievers of the King's Glory;" and a warrior, bearing the formidable titles of "Prince of the setting Sun," "Prince of Darkness," and "King of Hell," was intrusted with the command of this force. He took his position at Pegahmew, where he was attacked by the British on 9th of March. The result was the same as had attended all our engagements with the Burmese. We took possession of the place, and the "Retrievers of the King's Glory" fled in detached parties over the country. The unfortunate "Prince of the Setting Sun" ventured to return to Ava after his defeat, where he was immediately put to death by order of the king.

Peace was now inevitable, unless it had been resolved to allow Ava itself to fall into our hands. The army, which continued to advance, was met only 45 miles from that city by Dr. Price and Mr. Sandford, accompanied by two ministers of state and all the British prisoners who had been taken, during the war, and bringing the first instalment of the money payment (25 lakhs of rupees), as well as an authority under the sign-manual, to accept of such terms of peace as we might propose. These were finally settled and signed on the 24th of February 1826. This important Treaty of Peace between the Honourable East India Company on the one part, and his Majesty the King of Ava on the other, consisted

of the following Articles, to which we have much pleasure in giving a place in this work :—

“ Art. I.—There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the Honourable Company on the one part, and the King of Ava on the other.

“ Art. II.—His Majesty the King of Ava renounces all claims, and will abstain from all future interference with the principality of Assam and its dependencies, and also with the contiguous petty states of Cachar and Jyntea. With regard to Munnipore, it is stipulated, that, should Ghumbeer Singh desire to return to that country, he shall be recognised by the King of Ava as Rajah thereof.

“ Art. III.—To prevent all future disputes respecting the boundary between the two great nations, the British Government will retain the conquered provinces of Arracan, including the four divisions of Arracan, Ramree, Cheduba, and Sandoway, and his Majesty the King of Ava cedes all right thereto. The Unnoupectowmien, or Arracan mountains (known in Arracan by the name of Yeomatomung, or Pokhingloun range), will henceforth form the boundary between the two great nations on that side. Any doubts regarding the said line of demarcation, will be settled by the Commissioners appointed by the respective governments for that purpose, such Commissioners from both powers to be suitable and corresponding in rank.

“ Art. IV.—His Majesty, the King of Ava, cedes to the British Government the conquered provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, and Mergui and Tenasserim, with the islands and dependencies thereunto appertaining, taking the Salween river as the line of demarcation on that frontier. Any doubts regarding their boundaries will be settled as specified in the concluding part of Art. III.

“ Art. V.—In proof of the sincere disposition of the Burman Government to maintain the relations of peace and amity between the nations, and as part indemnification to the British Government for the expenses of the war, His Majesty, the King of Ava, agrees to pay the sum of one crore of rupees.

“ Art. VI.—No person whatever, whether native or foreigner, is hereafter to be molested by either party, on account of the part which he may have taken, or have been compelled to take, in the present war.

“ Art. VII.—In order to cultivate and improve the relations of amity and peace hereby established between the two Governments, it is agreed, that accredited ministers, retaining an



escort, or safeguard of fifty men from each, shall reside at the durbax of the other, who shall be permitted to purchase, or to build a suitable place of residence, of permanent materials; and a commercial treaty, upon principles of reciprocal advantage, will be entered into, by the two high contracting powers.

“Art VIII.—All public and private debts contracted by either government, or by the subjects of either government, with the others previous to the war, to be recognised and liquidated, upon the same principles of honour and good faith, as if hostilities had not taken place between the two nations; and no advantage shall be taken by either party, of the period that may have elapsed since the debts were incurred, or in consequence of the war; and according to the universal law of nations, it is farther stipulated, that the property of all British subjects who may die in the dominions of his Majesty, the King of Ava, shall, in the absence of legal heirs, be placed in the hands of the British Resident or Consul in the said dominions, who will dispose of the same according to the tenor of the British law. In like manner, the property of Burmese subjects, dying under the same circumstances, in any part of the British dominions, shall be made over to the Minister or other authority delegated by his Burman Majesty, to the supreme government of India.

“Art. IX.—The King of Ava will abolish all exactions upon British ships or vessels in Burman ports, that are not required for Burman ships or vessels in British ports; nor shall ships or vessels, the property of British subjects, whether European or Indian, entering the Rangoon river, or other Burman ports, be required to land their guns, or unship their rudders, or to do any other act not required by Burmese ships or vessels in British ports.

“Art. X.—The good and faithful ally of the British Government, his Majesty the King of Siam, having taken a part in the present war, will, to the fullest extent, as far as regards his Majesty and his subjects, be included in the above treaty.

“Art. XI.—This treaty to be ratified by the Burmese authorities competent in the like cases, and the ratification to be accompanied by all British, whether European or Native, American and other prisoners, who will be delivered over to the British Commissioners; the British Commissioners, on their part, engaging that the said treaty shall be ratified by the Right Honourable the Governor-General in Council, and the ratification shall be delivered to His Majesty the King of Ava, in four months, or

sooner if possible ; and all the Burmese prisoners shall, in like manner, be delivered over to their own government, as soon as they arrive from Bengal.

(Signed)  
LARGEEN MIONGA,  
Woongee, L. S.  
*Seal of the Lotoo.*

(Signed)  
SHWAGUIN WOON,  
Atawoon, L. S.

(Signed)  
A. CAMPBELL, Major-  
General and Senior  
Commissioner.

(Signed)  
T. C. ROBERTSON, Civil  
Commissioner, L. S.  
(Signed)  
H. D. CHADDS, Capt.  
R. N.

“ Additional Article.—The British Commissioners being most anxiously desirous to manifest the sincerity of their wish for peace, and to make the immediate execution of the fifth article of this treaty as little irksome or inconvenient as possible to His Majesty the King of Ava, consent to the following arrangements with respect to the division of the sum total, as specified in the article before referred to, into instalments ; viz. upon the payment of 25 lakhs of rupees, or one-fourth of the sum total, (the other articles of the treaty being executed), the army will retire to Rangoon. Upon the further payment of a similar sum at that place, within one hundred days from this date, with the proviso as above, the army will evacuate the dominions of His Majesty the King of Ava with the least possible delay, leaving the remaining moiety of the sum total to be paid by equal annual instalments in two years, from this 24th day of February 1826, A. D.,—through the Consul or Resident in Ava or Pegue, on the part of the Honorable East India Company.

(Signed)  
LARGEEN MIONGA,  
Woongee, L. S.  
*Seal of the Lotoo.*

(Signed)  
SHWAGUIN WOON,  
Atawoon, L. S.

(Signed)  
A. CAMPBELL, Major-  
General and Senior  
Commissioner.

(Signed)  
T. C. ROBERTSON, Civil  
Commissioner, L. S.  
H. D. CHADDS, Capt.  
R. N.

Thus concluded a war of a more serious and extensive nature than any in which our Indian

government had been engaged for a long period. The cool perseverance and intrepidity with which so small a force as that commanded by Sir Archibald Campbell marched far into the interior of a hostile country, overcoming in its progress thousands, not of rude barbarians, but of well-disciplined and most courageous soldiers, cannot certainly be sufficiently admired, and offers a subject of proud reflection for the historian of British valour. Ava itself, the golden capital of the "Lord of Earth and Air," would have been, had we so chosen, an easy prey to our victorious arms; but as our object was not so much to conquer a country as to teach a lesson of humility to a haughty people, and as the capture of a city which the Burmese venerate so highly might only have served to exasperate their feelings, and induce them to protract the war at any risk, it showed at once sound judgment and self-denial to abstain from proceeding to this last extremity, though we were within four days march of Ava. All that it was necessary for us to do, was done. The cession of Arracan, in particular, gives to our Indian territories on that frontier a security from hostile invasion, which they never before possessed; whilst the footing upon which our commercial relations with the Burmese empire have been placed, are of such a nature as to afford us advantages of the most important kind. Besides, the benefits derived from this war are not likely to be of a temporary nature. The eyes of the court of Ava must now be opened to the vast superiority of the British nation in point of military power; and whatever tone it may still affect to assume in conformity with the national policy

of most Eastern states which affects to treat every thing foreign with contempt, it will long continue to remember, with emotions of salutary fear, the defeat of its bravest and most numerous armies at Rangoon, at Donabew, at Prome, at Melloone, and at Peghamew.

In concluding this page of British history, it is particularly gratifying to be able to record, not only the brilliant actions of our brave soldiers, but the well-won gratitude of their fellow-countrymen. On the 8th of May 1827, Mr. C. W. Wynn moved in the House of Commons, and on the 14th Lord Goderich in the Lords, that the thanks of each House be given to the officers and men engaged in the late glorious successes in India. The thanks of the British Parliament have always been received as one of the best rewards which could be bestowed for services performed to the country; and certainly they were never given with the more hearty concurrence of the whole nation, than upon the present occasion.

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HAVING, in the preceding pages, endeavoured to give as distinct a narrative as our space would admit, of the late important transactions which have taken place between this country and Burmah, it is now our wish to present our readers with such additional information regarding the Burmese empire and national character, as we may have been able to collect from various sources, and as we feel confident will not be perused without interest. We are necessarily obliged to condense our facts as much as possi-

ble ; but they will not be the less deserving of attention on that account.

Aware as we now are of the great internal resources of Burman, its external or natural advantages must be no less obvious to every one who casts his eye over the map of those countries that surround the Bay of Bengal. Our territories, which lie on the north and the west, are at once discovered to be greatly inferior in most of the topographical requisites of a commercial and maritime country ; whilst, from the river Naaf on the Chittagong frontier, following the line of coast southwards as far as Tenasserim, are many commodious and safe harbours, even excluding those of Bassein and Rangoon, which are probably surpassed by none in the world. It is true, that the Burmese, either through ignorance or inactivity, have not derived that benefit which it was in their power to have done from these circumstances ; but this is probably only the more favourable for us, as it would induce them the more willingly to permit our merchants to establish upon the best footing a connexion for the purposes of trade and traffic with the ports alluded to. Neither ought it to be forgotten how fatal an influence it might have on our Eastern possessions, were any other European power hostile to us to obtain the command of any of those ports, and shut them against us. The fertility of Bengal, we already know from experience, is far from being beyond the influence of the seasons ; but if our settlements be maintained on the Burmese coast, the luxuriant and almost spontaneous productions of that empire would ever be to British India a certain resource against the calamities of famine.

Anxious therefore that nothing of consequence should remain unknown concerning a country to which we have of late been accustomed to look with so much interest, and with which our commercial and political relations are probably destined soon to be of a much more extensive and definite kind, we shall, in the sequel, without further introduction, arrange our remarks under the six different heads of Statistical Details of the Burmese Empire,—Peculiarities of the Court of Ava—Legislative Enactments—Public and Domestic Character of the People—Their Religion—and Literature.

1. STATISTICAL DETAILS.—The extent and boundaries of the Burmese dominions have been variously stated, and, changing as they continually are by the fortune of war, it is extremely difficult to state, with any thing like accuracy, the precise number of square miles over which his golden-footed Majesty bears sway. Malte Brun estimates the empire at about 1,050 geographical miles in length, and 600 in breadth, in which, however, it must have suffered considerably by the recent cession of Arracan. Both he and Colonel Franklin agree in stating the number of square miles to be about 194,000. The population of the empire was supposed by Colonel Symes, in 1795, to be 17,000,000; but Captain Cox, who succeeded Symes as an envoy to the court of Ummerapoora, has rated it at only 8,000,000, while Colonel Franklin, who seems to have been at great pains in collecting information upon this and other subjects connected with the Burmese, proceeds apparently upon sound data, in allowing only 25 inhabitants to a square mile, or a total population of little more

than 5,000,000. The reason probably why a traveller, possessing the acuteness and intelligence of Colonel Symes, may have been led to form so erroneous an estimate is, that he judged of the entire country by the fertile and populous tracts which line the banks of the Irawaddy. But this river, being the high road of the empire, evidently affords no fair rule by which to form an opinion of the remoter and less frequented districts. As nearly as Colonel Franklin could ascertain, there were in Ummerapoora, the late capital, 25,000 houses, and, as the taxes are levied on houses, he supposes that seven persons may be allowed to each, which makes the population of that city only 175,000 souls. It has been further ascertained, that there are at most not more than 8,000 cities, towns and villages, in the Burman dominions; and that these, owing to the necessity for the unprotected inhabitants uniting in societies, comprise probably nearly all the houses existing in the empire. Of these towns and villages the average is not more than 200 houses each, which gives the number of 1,600,000 houses, and this, at the rate of seven inhabitants to a house, yields, a population of 11,200,000, of which not more than one-half can be considered in a state of fixed and effective allegiance.

It is a somewhat curious fact, that the proportion of women to men in the Burman empire is about four to one. Colonel Franklin's inquiries, however, convinced him that this great disproportion was not to be attributed to any natural cause, as he ascertained that the births of females did not exceed that of the males beyond what is common. It must be accounted for

rather by the incessant wars in which the rapacious disposition of the Burmese sovereigns have continually involved their subjects. But from whatever cause this effect proceeds, the military force of the empire, a matter of some consequence cannot fail to be deeply affected by it.

There is no standing land force, except a small ill-disciplined corps of artillery, a still smaller body of cavalry, and about 2,000 infantry. The Burmese monarch's armies are always raised on the spur of the moment. The state council determines the number of men to be furnished by each district; and the Princes, Chobwas, and Lords, who hold their lands by military tenure, are bound to see that number made up without loss of time. When the rates are fixed, the two, four, or more houses which furnish one man, must advance, besides, 300 ticals (about 400 rupees) as his pay during the war, whatever its length may be. The recruit must furnish himself with a spear, sword, target, and musket; ammunition he receives gratis. Colonel Franklin was of opinion, that it would be difficult for the court of Ava to raise and maintain, for any length of time, an army exceeding 60,000 men. That he much underrated its ability in this respect, the events of the late war sufficiently attest. To secure the fidelity of the conscripts, their families are always retained in the district to which they belong; and should their relation desert, are mercilessly burnt alive without distinction of age or sex.

The revenue of the country is a subject upon which we still remain in great uncertainty. It



arises principally from the tribute of the Chobwas, the tithe of the produce of the crown lands, the mines, and the imports and exports. It is not a little increased also by the perpetual occurrence of confiscations, escheats, fines, donations, &c. &c. For the most part the revenues are collected in kind, with the exception of the tributes of the Chobwas, and the duties on cotton and some other articles, which are paid in bullion. The annual income of the public treasury does not probably exceed fifteen lakhs of rupees per annum. But whatever may be the state of the funds set aside for public services, the personal wealth of the golden monarch is always immense, consisting not only of the accumulated treasures of his ancestors, but of the property of almost every man of wealth or consideration in the country, whom he generally takes care to proscribe at least once in the course of his reign. Nor does the provision which he may find it necessary to make for his children or his household diminish these stores; they are supported by grants of territory, privileges of markets, or of levying imposts, or of some other patrimonial or acquired method of Eastern aggrandizement. On the whole the king of Ava is probably the richest prince in India.

The climate of Burmah is at once temperate and salubrious, and is perhaps superior to that of any other country in the same parallel of latitude.

"The seasons," says Colonel Franklin, "are regular, and a pestilence was never known. Earthquakes are very rare, and storms or tempests seldom felt." The rainy season, which

lasts for about four months, and which is common to all these latitudes, is indeed almost the only inconvenience of the climate. The soil of the lower provinces in particular, is extremely fertile, producing, besides vast quantities of most valuable teak-wood, a great variety of grains, as well as indigo, tobacco, cotton, and sugar. Fruit is exceedingly plentiful, and some sorts are peculiar to the country; mangoes, oranges and melons, are abundant, and in great perfection. Vegetables of all kinds are also plentiful, and a dearth is seldom known. The country, likewise, is well stocked with mines and minerals. It contains, too, several mineral springs, as well as caverns and caves, which, if the accounts given of them be true, surpass every thing of the kind hitherto known.

The exports of Burmah are numerous and valuable. Of the raw materials, the teak-timber is undoubtedly entitled to the precedence. The consumption of this invaluable wood in the country itself is very great, both for their common houses, their numerous religious buildings, and their river-boats. Yet so inexhaustible are the forests which line the banks of the Irawaddy, and some of the other rivers, that the supplies continue as abundant as ever, and little variation has occurred in the price. It is difficult to calculate the advantage which this country may derive from an extensive commerce in this article as a means of supporting that naval power, by which alone we are enabled to retain the dominion of the seas. The article next in importance is cotton, of which great quantities are annually exported to China. Among many other

articles of crude produce, it is proper to enumerate ivory, which in Burmah is considered royal property—wax, which is procured very plentifully—lead—copper—arsenic—tin, which is for the most part brought from Tavoy and Mergui—amber—indigo—paper, of two kinds, one made of the bark of the paper mulberry, white and fine, the other of the macerated filaments of bamboo, dark and coarse—birds' nests, in great request for the China market, and collected in small islands on the coast,—fish-maws, and shark-fins, also for the China market,—tobacco, which has been long cultivated and used in the country, and is probably indigenous, notwithstanding that some botanists maintain it to have been imported into Asia from America—honey, which is very plentiful, the Burman wilds being extensive, and abounding in bees—rice, nutritive, but coarse—precious stones, of all sorts except the diamond; but particularly rubies, of excellent quality, sapphires, emeralds, topazes, amethysts and garnets. Many other articles of a similar nature might be enumerated, but these are the principal.

We find likewise from Colonel Franklin, that the principal manufactures of the kingdom, at least those which are intended for its exportation, are; 1st, Ships built in Burmese ports, of which it was understood in 1801, that, on an average of the preceding ten years, 3,000 tons were built per annum; 2nd, Towelling, of which they are famous for making a rough kind; 3rd, Earthen-ware from Pegue, which has long been celebrated for this manufacture; 4th, Saltpetre, not well refined, and one cause consequently of the badness of their gunpowder; 5th, Silks of vari-

ous kinds, of which, however few are exported; and, 6th, Silver Bullion, according to the weight of which, of various standards, from the want of a current coin, the Burmese generally keep their accounts.

The number of vessels which may belong to Burmese merchants cannot be great. The character of the people in time of peace, the continuance of which can never be calculated on for a year at a time, is unquestionably more of an agricultural than commercial kind. They are very indifferent sailors, their voyages being seldom any thing else than coasting expeditions, through channels little exposed, and the greater part of their export trade being carried on in foreign bottoms. To the possession of a navy, they have not the most distant pretensions, the only thing in the shape of a marine force, which they can boast, consisting of the Irawaddy war-boats, described by Colonel Symes and others. The largest of these are from 80 to 100 feet long, but in breadth they seldom exceed 8 feet. They carry from 50 to 60 rowers, and a piece of ordnance proportionate to the size of the boat. Each rower is armed, and a party of soldiers is also commonly on board. They sail in fleets, and their attack is very impetuous. The sailors encourage each other, by singing a war-song, and can impel the vessel with either the stern or the prow foremost. The largest of these boats does not draw more than three feet of water. In a military point of view, they are the most respectable part of the Burman force.

To these details we have only to add, that Burmah is in general divided into the Upper and Lower provinces, Ummerapoora or Ava being

probably about the centre of the empire. To the north and east of that capital, the country is mountainous, but intersected by many delightful valleys, under the command of the numerous petty princes named Chobwas, who pay a certain annual tribute. The inhabitants of these districts are called Shans, which may not inappropriately be translated Highlanders. From Ava to Prome, within which boundaries lie the most central parts of the Burmese empire, the country is much more level, and the soil on the banks of the river is perhaps the richest in the world. The ancient kingdom of Tonghoo is also fertile, but thinly inhabited. The country between Prome and Rangoon, which now constitutes Lower Ava, and was formerly the kingdom of Pegue, is populous and well cultivated; and it is with this part of the empire that the British are as yet best acquainted.

**II. PECULARITIES OF THE COURT OF AVA.—**  
The constitution of the Burman government is, in the strictest sense of the word, despotic. The king is above all the laws, and the most implicit obedience to his commands is inculcated as the first duty of the subject. Assuming, as he does, titles which in their sounding emptiness mock the weakness of humanity, the lord of earth and air hesitates not to arrogate the prerogative, and exact the adoration paid to a deity. The very existence of all the most ancient usages and customs of the country depend upon his voice; and life, liberty and property, are toys with which he sports at will. His external splendour far exceeds that of any European sovereign; and as we have already said, his wealth is inexhaustible. His

privy counsel, who advise with him on affairs of state, consists commonly of four old men, his personal friends, to whom experience may be supposed to have taught wisdom, and the advance of life to have moderated the ambition and calmed the passions of youth. There is, besides, a great public council where the king commonly presides, and where nothing can be determined without his sanction.

Pride, as well as splendour, is a characteristic feature of the Burmese court; both are indeed the common attendants of tyranny. The reception which the various ambassadors have met with whom the British Government of India have seen cause to send to Ava, sufficiently marks the haughty and unbending tone which that court is disposed to assume towards foreigners. Unlike the powers of Hindostan, with whom we have had occasion to have any intercourse, and who, from the days of Tamerlane, have undeviatingly observed the same formalities towards our envoys, the Burmans always received them with jealousy, frequently treated them with insolence, and almost always dismissed them unceremoniously. Whether the late war may have effected any change in their sentiments upon this subject, is yet to be proved; but certainly the facts mentioned both by Colonel Symes, and his still less fortunate successor, Captain Cox, are enough to rouse indignation, if they had not previously excited contempt.

But it is not towards foreigners alone that this farce of unapproachable sublimity is attempted to be kept up on the part of his celestial majesty. Every artifice is resorted to which power can

command, or wealth execute, or superstition enhance to inspire the minds of the people with the profoundest awe, veneration, and fear of their emperor. He rarely goes abroad; but when he does, it is always in a style of more than Oriental magnificence, and probably for the purpose of laying the foundation of some splendid religious structure, or of consecrating, when finished, some golden pagoda of dazzling grandeur. With the same motives also, it is the policy of the court frequently to change the seat of government, and consequently the residence of the emperor. Ummerapoor, so long known by the proud title of the Immortal City, is not now the capital of Burmah. In 1824 a new palace was building at Old Ava, of which the king was to take possession as soon as finished; and of course the wooden houses, temples, and colonnades of Ummerapoor would speedily follow him. The wives, children, brothers, and other relations of the king, have always residences near his, in a style of proportionate pomp.

The Burmese being naturally a gay careless people, have many stated days of public amusement and idleness. The court condescends to take part in their sports only once or twice a year. Upon these occasions its favourite entertainment is an exhibition of fire-works, got up under the superintendence of numerous dependant princes, who vie with each other in the brilliancy and costliness of their preparations and not unfrequently receive presents from the king when they have the good fortune to please him. The principal part of these fire-works are rockets of a size infinitely exceeding any thing known in

this country. When Captain Cox was at Ummerapoora, the Lord of Earth and Air himself cut down two large trees to make into rockets, each of which was to contain 10,500 pounds of gunpowder. The effect produced by the simultaneous firing of ten or twenty such rockets must be somewhat striking.

Upon these public occasions his Majesty usually appears in one of his splendid imperial state carriages. That which was captured during the late war, and publicly exhibited in this country, afforded a tolerable specimen of what these state carriages are. It was one of the most singular and magnificent productions of art that can well be imagined, presenting one entire blaze of gold, silver, and precious stones, the number of the latter amounting to many thousands—comprehending diamonds, rubies, white and blue sapphires, emeralds, amethysts, garnets, topazes, and crystals of all sorts. The carving was of a very superior description; and the form and construction of the carriage, though curious to European eyes, was nevertheless in such good taste, and the workmanship so chaste and refined, that the general effect was exceedingly imposing. It was between twenty and thirty feet high, and is in Burmah always drawn by elephants.

Ridiculous as the importance attached to these matters by this Eastern despot may seem, it is probably well for the country over which he bears sway that his dispositions lead him to indulge in excesses of no more criminal a kind. The Burman monarch, conscious as he is of his own power, and willing enough on many occasions to exert it to the utmost, does not on the



whole seem desirous to interfere materially with the domestic habits and happiness of his people. To those at a distance, whom he knows to be possessed of power as well as himself, he is invariably reserved and haughty; to those whom birth or accidental circumstances have given a high, and perhaps formidable rank in the state, he seldom scruples at the dictates, either of prudence or fear, to be both cruel and unjust; but to those whom fortune has placed in what he regards an unmeasurable grade below him in the scale of creation, he is altogether indifferent, viewing them only as tools in the hands of his magistrates, and governors, by which to effect his measures of state policy. This will perhaps appear still more clear when we have said a few words on

### III. BURMESE LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS.—

All the cities throughout the empire are governed by Maywhoons who apparently correspond pretty nearly with our Lord Mayors. The Maywhoon is commonly assisted by three other civil magistrates, who act as judges in all civil and criminal suits, holding their court in the town-hall or "Place of Truth," of which there is one in every city. Besides, every great officer, whether civil or military, is a justice of peace within a certain district, and can try petty causes, and punish trespasses by flogging, fine, or imprisonment. One of the great evils, indeed, to which the people are exposed, arises from the multiplicity of these officers, who claim the privilege of acting as justices of peace. All causes must originate in the town-hall, but may be removed by appeal to the Lotoo, or Great Court of the empire, and ultimately to his

Majesty in Council; but the expense of obtaining a hearing there is enormous.

In addition to the common mode of deciding causes, which is by the ancient written law, much altered, it is true, by subsequent custom from its original institutes, trials by ordeal, varying a good deal from those of India, are common throughout the empire. Of trials of this kind, Captain Cox mentions the following curious instance which took place, to ascertain the truth of an accusation of adultery against a native: "The defendant denying the charge, the principals, witnesses and court, adjourned to a small pagoda without the walls of the town, when all the parties were solemnly sworn according to the rites of the Burman faith, the depositions of the witnesses taken down, and the Deity invoked by the priest to judge between the parties. A certain quantity of wax was weighed in two equal portions, and formed into two candles, which were lighted at the same instant. One was held by the plaintiff, the other by the defendant; and the holder of the candle which first burned out was adjudged to have sworn falsely, and of course lost the cause, and would be sentenced to pay the cost of the suit, amounting to 400 ticals, and damage 300 ticals. In this case, the defendant's candle burned out first, when the people gave a shout, and the plaintiff's friends having prepared a band of music and dancers, they exhibited before the people."

In their punishments the Burmans are exceedingly severe. The mildest manner of suffering death is to have the head taken off with a large knife, commonly at one stroke. Killing by vari-

ous modes of barbarous torture, is much more common. Reprieves may not unfrequently be purchased with money, however deserving of punishment the malefactors be; but, if money be wanting, the slightest offence is visited without mercy. Mrs Judson, who writes an account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman empire, relates the particulars of one or two executions at which she and her husband were present. The scenes were shocking in the extreme. On one occasion "four Burmans were fastened to a high fence, first by the hair of the head and neck; their arms were then extended horizontally, as far as they could be stretched, without dislocation, and a cord tied tight around them; their thighs and legs were then tied in their natural position; they were ripped open from the lowest to the highest extremity of the stomach, and their vitals and part of their bowels were hanging out; large gashes were cut in a downward direction in their sides and thighs, so as to bare the ribs and thighbones. One, who I suppose was more guilty than the rest, had an iron instrument thrust sidelong through the breast, and part of his vitals pushed out in the opposite direction. Thus, with the under-jaw fallen, their eyes open and fixed, naked, excepting a cloth round the middle, they hung dead." Afterwards, Mrs Judson was present when six men were executed. There were seven culprits in all; but of these two were brothers, who requested to be shot, asking, at the same time, to be pardoned if the fourth shot should miss. The elder brother was fired at four times without effect, and was then loosed from the tree to which he

had been tied, amidst the shouts and laughter of the spectators. The younger brother was less fortunate; he expired at the second shot. The remaining five were beheaded each at one blow. "We went close to them," says Mrs Judson, "and saw their trunks and their heads and their blood. We saw a man put his foot on one of the trunks, and press it with as little feeling as one would tread upon a beast." This piece of wanton cruelty must not however be considered as characteristic of national feeling, as it is likely that none but the worst characters frequented such scenes as these. The crimes of the poor creatures alluded to were various. One had been digging under a pagoda; another had stabbed a woman, but had not killed her; and the rest were robbers.

One great object of the Burmese laws, is to secure the allegiance of the subject to the sovereign. The form of the oath of allegiance is particularly solemn and imposing. A book of religious institutions, and an image with a bowl of water are placed before the person who is about to take it. The image is held up before him, he lifts the bowl in his hands, and repeats these words:—"In the presence of the Creator of five thousand worlds, with all the saints therein, five large rivers, and five hundred small, the the seas and all therein, I call all the saints and angels in heaven and earth to bear me witness, that I wish to be a true and faithful subject of the king of Ava. May God grant, that, if I should desert his service, I may not pass in safety by water, but the fishes of the ocean may devour and tear me to pieces! May God grant, that, if

I should desert his service, I may not pass in safety by land, but be devoured by wild beasts of the earth! May God grant, that, if I should not keep this oath, and ever rebel against my king and country, the above may happen to me; that I may be afflicted with the scourges of the Almighty, and die an ignominious death!" This oath is thrice repeated; the paper on which it is inscribed is then burnt, and the ashes put into the bowl of water, in which the muzzle of a musket and the points of a sabre and lance being dipped, the person says:—"May these weapons become the instruments of my destruction, if ever I swerve from the oath I have just taken!" The priest then presents the bowl, and the water is drunk. Should the oath ever be swerved from, the delinquent is consigned to a capital punishment of the most dreadful kind, commonly impalement, and his house and family are burnt.

There is a great number of slaves in the Burman empire, the father of a family being always allowed to sell his wife and children for the payment of his debts. This he is frequently obliged to do, not on account of any debts which he voluntarily incurs, but because, under this despotic government, a tax is frequently levied on an individual much beyond his ability to pay, and he is put to the torture until the sum be produced. The case, however, is still harder when the parent dies in debt; for then the creditor may lay claim to the orphans, and either retain them himself, or sell them for an equivalent sum. Notwithstanding all these severities, however, the Burman system of laws contains much that

is good; and, on the whole, we doubt extremely that there is a greater proportion of crime or misery in that empire, than will be found in countries which boast of a greater share of civilization.

IV. PUBLIC AND DOMESTIC CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.—It is a matter of extreme difficulty to speak with any accuracy of national character, even where we have had numerous opportunities, by frequent intercourse and personal observation, to draw our own conclusions regarding it. Of a nation till lately so little known to us, and concerning which its unfriendly dispositions towards us have tended to foster so many prejudices, it becomes us to speak with every caution and forbearance. In time of war, more especially if the country be ravaged by an invading army, it is next to impossible for those invaders to form any just conception of the people whom they have come to conquer and to kill. In speaking of the Burmese, therefore, as a nation, we should much rather allow ourselves to be guided by the opinions entertained, and the facts stated, by such of our countrymen as happen to have had an opportunity of visiting it in times of peace and tranquillity. Yet even they, we find, disagree widely among themselves. Nor is this to be wondered at, considering the various aspects under which various circumstances place different foreigners. Colonel Symes, we have seen, entertained, on the whole, rather a favourable impression of the Burmese, though he by no means shut his eyes to some of their ruling vices—such as cunning, avarice, and cruelty. On the whole, we are disposed to think

with him, that we shall get nearest the truth by taking a middle course. If they are apt to be audacious and haughty towards strangers, it cannot be denied that they are in no slight degree patriotic and courageous. If, in their dealings with each other, they are too often litigious and deceitful, they are at the same time charitable to their priests and the poor, and much inclined to be hospitable and cheerful. If in war they are treacherous and ferocious, they are also patient under sufferings, frugal and hardy. If in their persons, houses, and food, they are inclined, from a lazy habit, to be careless and filthy, they are in general affectionate parents, dutiful children, sincere friends, and not vindictive enemies. Mrs. Judson, an intelligent woman, who has lived many years in the Burman empire, goes still further. She describes the Burmese as "a lively, industrious, and energetic race, further advanced in civilization than most of the Eastern nations. They are frank, candid, and destitute of that pusillanimity which distinguishes the Hindoos, and of that revengeful malignity which is a leading trait in the Malay character."

Some of their Domestic customs are curious. We can only mention a few. If a young woman grows ill, the doctor and her parents frequently enter into an agreement, that, if she lives, the doctor shall take her as his property; but if she dies, that he shall pay her value to the parents. "I do not know," says Dr Buchanan, a writer of much research, "if the doctor may sell the girl again, or must retain her in his family; but the number of fine young women, which I saw in the house of a doctor at

Meaday, makes me think the practice to be very common."

In their food, the Burmans, according to our notions, are very uncleanly. The lower classes eat all kinds of reptiles, lizards, guanas, and snakes. Their religion forbids them killing animal food; and, consequently animals that have died from disease are generally eaten throughout the country. Captain Cox thinks that this custom, in which they resemble their neighbour the Chinese, is the cause of a dreadful disorder that attacks the extremities with ulcerous sores, which soon mortify, and leave those that survive disgusting and mutilated objects. Horse-flesh is in peculiar estimation among all the artificers in metals, who think it best calculated to recruit the strength wasted by working at their forges. Venison is the only meat permitted to be sold in the markets, a privilege allowed for the encouragement of hunters. The killing of a cow is punished with particular severity.

The Burmans are exceedingly fond of gaiety and amusements of all sorts. In private, chess is their favourite entertainment, a game they deservedly hold in high estimation. Their board is the same as ours, and so is the number of their pieces; but they vary considerably in power. They arrange them in three rows, so that some squares on either hand are left unoccupied. The game, as played by them, is a good deal more complex than ours. Their sacred writings authorize chess. Music is another favourite recreation of the Burmans. Their musical instruments, though, in many respects, rude and imperfect, are yet capable of producing



tones of much power and sweetness. Their softer airs, in particular, please even the somewhat fastidious ears of foreigners. Their principal instruments are, a harp of uncouth construction ; a *turr*, which is something like our violin ; a *pullaway*, which is a common flageolet ; a *kye-zoup*, which is composed of a collection of cymbals, producing modulated gradations of sound ; a *patola*, or guitar, made in the shape of a crocodile, and used as an accompaniment to the voice ; a *boundaw*, or collection of drums, used in full bands in processions ; and a *heem*, or pipe of Pan, composed of reeds, neatly joined together, and producing soft plaintive melody. Dr Buchanan purchased a whole set of these musical instruments for something under six guineas ; and suggests, that it would be no unprofitable speculation, to import into this country a band of Burmese musicians, who would probably attract considerable attention. Almost every Burman has some instrument or other to beguile his vacant hours ; he who can procure no better, is contented with a Jew's harp.

Their public amusements consist principally of exhibitions of fire-works, in which they greatly delight, and which, during certain annual festivals, are always provided at the expense of government. Water contests, too, as described by Colonel Symes, and which seem to be a kind of substitute for the want of snow-balls, are common, and much relished. The Burmese, are likewise a dramatic people, and give considerable encouragement to stage representations, although it does not appear that they have made much progress beyond pantomime and melo-drama.

Indian jugglers, and other mountebanks, are continually perambulating the country ; and, on the whole, they appear to have almost a Parisian delight in strange sights and shows.

In personal appearance, the Burmese resemble the Chinese more than the Hindoos. The men are, in general, not much above the middle size, but are robust and active ; and, from a custom they have of plucking out their beards, retain a youthful appearance for a long time. In their temperament there is little of the languid inactivity which distinguishes the natives of Hindostan. The nose is generally small, but not flattened like that of the negro. Their complexion is dark, a kind of medium between the deep tinge of the inhabitant of Africa and the clear bloom of the European ; it is, in fact, of a light yellow. The women are somewhat fairer, and, in general, well made, though inclined to corpulence ; their hair is almost always black. Mixed with the Burmese are the remains of several peculiar tribes. The Shans or Highlanders, already mentioned, are the most remarkable. They are distinguished by their simple, honest, and inoffensive manners, and speak a dialect peculiar to themselves. These tribes, however, live on the best terms with the Burmese. What is still more fortunate for that people, there does not exist among them any such thing as caste—the chief curse of many parts of India. Society is with them founded on a much more liberal basis, the path to rank, wealth, and honour, being open alike to all. This is, of itself, sufficient to secure for them a much more rapid progress in the scale of nations,

than can ever be made by many of the surrounding countries.

RELIGION.—There cannot be a doubt that the Burmese are entitled to be considered a devout and pious people, although what they term religion would hardly go under that appellation in any part of Europe. Whilst they believe in the existence of various gods, or of human beings who have become gods, they have formed no conception whatever of a Supreme Being, who has created, and preserves the universe. The system of morals, however, which their religious doctrines inculcate, is good; and the fear of punishment, and hope of reward, are the motives held out for the practice of virtue. Godama or Gaudma, their supreme divinity, is believed by them to have been the fourth incarnation of Buddha. The particular attributes with which they invest him, as well as the leading principles of their creed, will be best understood by a perusal of the following very interesting catechism, translated from the original Burmese by Dr. Buchanan, and which we have ventured on slightly abridging, to adapt it better to our limits. It is entitled,

*A Short View of the Religion of Godama.*

“A Catholic Bishop, residing at Ava, some time ago asked the chief Rahan, called Zaradobura, to give him some short treatise, which would explain the heads of the law taught by Godama. The Zarado, willing to satisfy the Bishop, wrote for his use the following treatise:—

“The gods who have appeared in this present world, and who have obtained the perfect state, *Nieban*, are four, Chauchasam, Gonagom, Gaspa, and Godama.

“Q. Of which of these gods ought the law at present to be followed?

“A. Of the god Godama.

“ Q. Where is the god Godama ?

“ A. Godama, at the age of thirty-five years, having obtained divinity, preached his law for forty-five years, and brought salvation to all living beings. At eighty years of age he obtained *Nieban* and this happened 2362 years ago. Then Godama said, ‘ After I shall have departed from this earth, I will preserve my law and disciples for five thousand years ; and he commanded that his images and relics should be worshipped, which has accordingly been ever since done.

“ Q. In saying that Godama obtained *Nieban*, what is understood by that word ?

“ A. When a person is no longer subject to any of the following miseries, namely, to weight, old age, disease, and death, then he is said to have obtained *Nieban*. Nothing, no place, can give us an adequate idea of *Nieban* ; we commonly say, that to be free from the four above mentioned miseries, and to obtain salvation, is *Nieban*. In the same manner as when any person, labouring under a severe disease, recovers by the assistance of medicine, we say, he has obtained health ; but if any person wishes to know the manner, or cause of his thus obtaining health, it can only be answered, that to be restored to health signifies no more than to be recovered from disease. In the same manner only can we speak of *Nieban*, and after this manner Godama taught.

“ Q. Is not Godama the only true god on the face of this earth ?

“ A. Godama is the only true and pure god, who knows the four laws called *Sizza*, and who can bestow *Nieban*. In the same manner as on the destruction of a kingdom, many arise who aspire to the throne, and who assume the royal insignia ; so, when the time fixed for the duration of the law preceding Godama had expired, and it had been prophesied for a thousand years, that a new god was about to appear, six men, before the coming of Godama, pretended that they were gods, and each of them was followed by five hundred disciples.

“ Q. Did those false gods preach no doctrine ?

“ A. They did preach, but that which they taught was false.

“ Q. What did they teach ?

“ A. One taught, that the cause of all the good and evil which happen in the world, of poverty and wealth, of nobility and want, of rank, was a certain superior *Nat* of the woods, who on this account, ought to be worshipped by mankind.

“ A second taught, that after death men were by no means changed into animals, and that animals, on being slain, were

not changed into men; but that, after death, men were always born men, and animals born animals.

"A third denied the proper *Nieban*, and asserted, that all living beings had their beginning in their mother's womb, and would have their end in death; and that there is no other *Nieban* but this death.

"A fourth taught, that all living things neither had a beginning, nor would have an end; and that every thing which happens arises from a fortuitous and blind fate. He denied the lot of good and evil deeds, which, according to the law of Godama, is the efficient cause of all the good and evil that happen to living beings.

"The fifth taught, that *Nieban* consists in nothing more than the life of certain *Nat* and *Biamma*, who live for the whole duration of a world. He asserted, that the chief good works are, to honour our parents, to endure the heat of the sun or of the fire, and to support hunger; that there is no crime<sup>\*</sup> in killing animals. He said, that such as performed these good works, would be rewarded in a future life, and that such as did the contrary would be punished.

"The last taught, that there existed a being, who had created the world, and all things which are therein, and that this being only is worthy to be adored.\*

"Now all these false gods or deities taught such things, not because they believed them to be true, but in order to answer questions which had been proposed to them, they said whatever at the time came into their minds.

"Q. When the true god Godama appeared, did not the false gods renounce their doctrines?

"A. Some of them did, but others still continue obstinate; and with all these Godama fought in the kingdom Saulti, near the tree Manche. What greater miracle can be performed?

"Q. In this conflict, who gained the superiority?

"A. Godama did; on which account the ring-leader of the false gods was so ashamed, that, tying a pot about his neck, he threw himself into a river, and was drowned.

"Q. What is the doctrine and law which Godama delivered to be observed by all men?

"A. It consists chiefly in observing the five commandments, and in abstaining from the ten sins.

1 "Q. What are the five commandments?

\* Here the Zarado probably alludes to Devadat, as the *Rahans* call Jesus Christ.

“ A. I. From the meanest insect up to man, thou shalt kill no animal whatever. II. Thou shalt not steal. III. Thou shalt not violate the wife or concubine of another. IV. Thou shalt tell nothing false. V. Thou shalt drink neither wine, nor any thing that will intoxicate; thou shalt not eat opium, nor other inebriating drug. Whoever keeps these five commandments, during all successive transmigrations, shall either be born a nobleman, or *Nat*, and shall not be liable to poverty, nor to other misfortunes and calamities.

“ Q. What are called by the common appellation *Duzzaraik*, and are divided into three classes. In the first class are comprehended the works which are contrary to the commandments; namely, I. The killing of animals. II. Theft. III. Adultery. In the second class are contained, IV. Falsehood. V. Discord. VI. Harsh and indignant language. VII. Idle and superfluous talk. To the third class belong, VIII. The coveting of your neighbour's goods. IX. Envy, and the desire of your neighbour's death, and misfortunes. X. The following of the doctrine of false gods. He who abstains from these sins is said to observe *Sila*; and every one who observes *Sila*, in all successive transmigrations, will continually increase in virtue, till at length he will become worthy of beholding a god, of hearing his great voice; and thus he will obtain *Neiban*, and be exempted from the four known miseries, namely, weight, old age, disease, and death. We must also believe, that Godama taught, if we observe his laws, we shall see the other gods who are to arise after him.

“ Revolving these things in your minds, O ye *English, Dutch, Armenians*, and others, adore Godama, the true God! Adore also his law and his priests. Be solicitous in giving alms, in the observance of *Sila*, and in performing *Bavana*. But a true and legitimate priest of Godama is not to be found, except in this empire, or in the island of Ceylon; and you, O bishop! have obtained a great lot, who have been thought worthy, although born in one of the small islands depending on *Zabudiba*, to come hither, and to hear the truth of the divine law. This book which I now give you, is more estimable than gold and silver, than diamonds and precious stones. And I exhort all *English, Dutch, Armenians*, and others faithfully to transcribe its contents, and diligently to act according to the precepts therein contained.”

The veneration paid to Godama throughout the empire, is great and unceasing. Of the manner in which the religious ceremonies upon great occasions are performed, Mrs. Judson thus

writes: "This is the season for the great feast of Gaudama. It commenced yesterday, and is to continue for three days. It is observed all over the country; but I presume the multitude collected in this place is much greater than at any other, excepting Ava. Priests and people come in boats from a great distance to worship at the pagoda in this place, which is supposed to contain the relick of Gaudama. The viceroy, on these days, goes out in all the pomp and splendour possible, dressed and ornamented with all the insignia of office, attended by the members of government and the common people. After kneeling and worshipping at the pagoda, they generally spend the day in amusements, such as boxing, dancing, singing, theatrical exhibitions, and fireworks. Most of the older people spend the night at the pagoda, and listen to the instructions of the priests."

Of course, the priests are in Burmah a numerous and popular tribe. They live by themselves in monasteries, wear yellow apparel to distinguish their shaven heads and unshod feet, and are supported by voluntary contributions. Persons of all ages are admitted into the priesthood. They live a life of celibacy, and perform no labour. Their days of public worship are indicated by the four quarters of the moon. Those of the full and new moon are the most solemn.

As was to be expected, the Burmans are not contented with being religious alone, but are also grossly superstitious. Astrologers are in great repute among them, who predict lucky and unlucky days, watch the position of the planets at the birth of children, and read a man's fortune on the palm of his hand. The existence of evil spirits, ghosts, witches, and all kind of demons, is firmly credited. They suppose that certain kinds of diseases may be frightened away by making a great noise; and the medical profession is peculiarly under the control of

superstition, charms being firmly believed in, and an ideal potency attached to many medicinal compounds. The dead are burned or buried (the former being considered the most honourable) with religious rite; but it does not appear that matrimonial connexions are considered as having any thing to do with the tenets of Godama. In no country, indeed, are marriages more quickly got up, polygamy being allowed, and a Burman sometimes taking to himself three or four wives in the course of a month. Upon this subject much more that is interesting and important might be written, but our space forbids.\*

VI. LITERATURE.—The Burmese are a well educated people, at least the male part of the community, the boys throughout the empire being taught by the priests both to read and write. There is a library in almost every monastery. In their more elegant books they write on sheets of ivory, or on very fine white palmyra leaves. The margins of the former are ornamented with gilding, and of the latter with flowers painted in various bright colours. In their more common books less pains are taken, the characters being engraved with an iron stile on palmyra leaves of an inferior texture. The contents of these books are various. Those upon law and religion are mostly translated from the ancient Pali language, which is probably

\* We would refer those who are desirous of more information concerning the religion of the Burmese, to an exceedingly able and erudite paper by Dr. Buchanan, in the 6th. Vol. of the Asiatic Researches, where much new and curious information will be found.



the same as the Sanscrit. There are many treatises on law. On medicine also there are several books of authority ; but little is known of surgery, unless the art of dressing wounds and setting bones. Inoculation, too, has been lately introduced, but is not yet general. The Burmans have many histories, principally of the lives and actions of their own kings ; and, like some of the most celebrated Greek and Roman historians, the writers always take care to give a particular account of all the omens and prodigies which accompanied the events they relate. They have also translated for their own use the histories of the Chinese, the Siamese, and some other neighbouring nations. They are excessively fond of poetry ; but their poetry is almost entirely lyrical, and most of it written for the purpose of being adapted to music. Their dramatic entertainments are principally musical, with a little dancing and dialogue introduced occasionally. The subject is commonly taken from some of the legends of their heroes ; and after the different characters and songs have been assigned to the different performers, the dialogue itself is left to the extemporaneous ingenuity of the actor. These actors are for the most part Siamese, and exhibit in general before an indulgent and easily pleased audience.

The Burman language seems to be far from having arrived at any fixed state of grammatical perfection. In its original state it was probably purely monosyllabic ; but as the Pali has been very liberally engrafted on it, many polysyllables have been consequently formed. "It has no inflexions," says a writer upon this subject, "and

depends almost entirely on juxta-position for the relative value of its words. Its pronouns and particles are peculiar, its idioms few and simple, its metaphors of the most obvious kind, but it is copious in terms expressive of rank and dignity; and the rank of the speaker is indicated by the peculiar phraseology which he employs. Repetitions of the same turn and expression are affected, rather than shunned; and a sententious brevity and naked simplicity of phrase are the greatest beauties of which the language admits." One great impediment in the way of obtaining a critical knowledge of the Burman language is, that there is no regular standard of orthography, nor no grammar rules of universal application. Every author spells after a fashion of his own; and what is good grammar with one, is considered grossly inaccurate by another. Mr. and Mrs. Judson studied the language for two years, before making any considerable progress in it. With the exception, indeed, of the solitary circumstance, that the Burmans write from left to right, there is no one common feature between any of their books and those of Europe. The forms of expression, the shape of the letters, the appearance of the words, which are not divided and distinguished by breaks, points, and capitals, but run together in one unbroken line, making a whole paragraph look like one word, the characters scratched on dried palm-leaves, and every thing, in short, that forms the constituent parts of a book, bears an oriental, and, to the conceptions of a foreigner, a new and strange appearance.

There can be little doubt, that the introduc-

ion into Burmah of some of the improvements made by the Western nations, in the art of disseminating knowledge, would be attended with the happiest results in that country. Nor is there much reason to fear, that one of the consequences of the late war, or rather of the terms of peace, will be the gradual diffusion of many European customs and luxuries over that empire. It is a most important fact, that though female education seems to be intentionally neglected, there is hardly a male throughout the empire who cannot both read and write. The Burmese, though vain, are not a bigoted or narrow-minded people; and the day is probably not far distant, when the enlightening influence of their British neighbours, combined with their own increasing willingness to receive instruction, may raise them to a rank, hitherto arrogated, more through a spirit of empty pride, than fairly won, either by their military prowess, or intellectual and moral greatness.

END.



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